

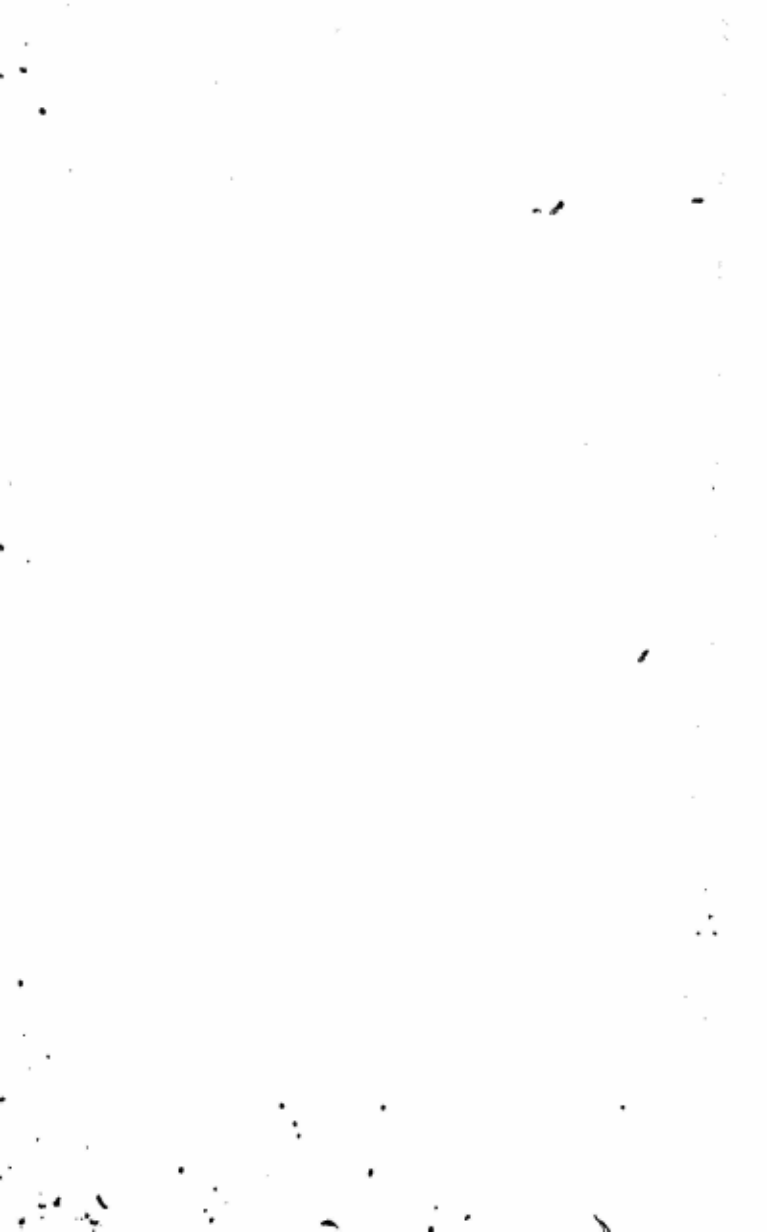
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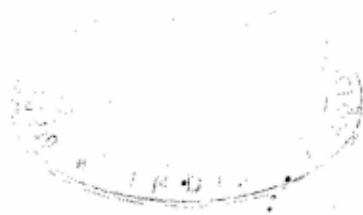
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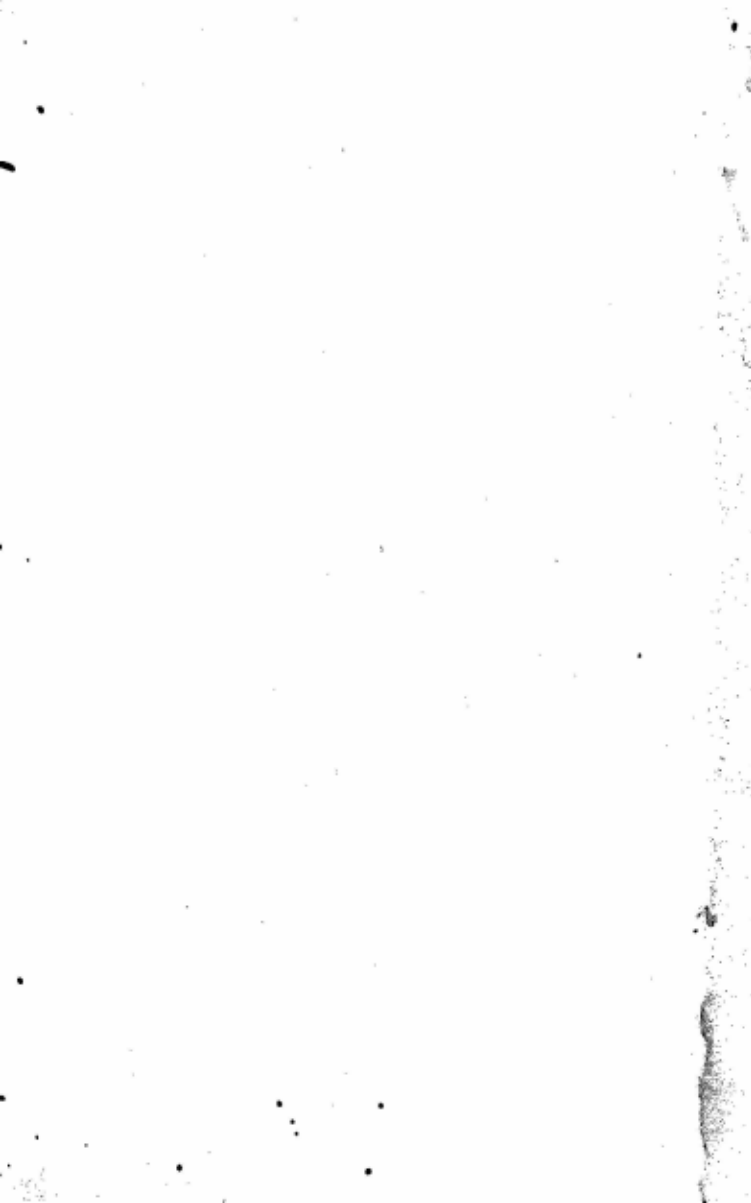
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THE ENGLISH
IN INDIA





THE ENGLISH IN INDIA

A PROBLEM OF POLITICS

BY

SIR JOHN A. R. MARRIOTT

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PREFACE

I WISH to make it clear to all readers, critical or casual, of this book that it is not a history of India. It deals only with the history of the *English in India*, and embodies an attempt to analyse the difficult and anxious problems arising out of circumstances unique in the history of mankind.

Nor is this book merely a *livre de circonstance*. It would be affectation to deny that its publication has been precipitated by the present crisis in Indian affairs, but I have, in fact, been working on the subject—intermittently of course—for many years, and am now led to publish the results of my work in the hope of making a modest contribution to the solution of a problem as difficult as any that ever confronted an Imperial Power.

The solution must evidently be sought in conjunction with the best minds, British and Indian, in India itself; but the ultimate responsibility for finding it lies on the Parliament and the Electorate of the United Kingdom. There can, I am convinced, be no hope of finding it without a clear apprehension of the essential conditions of the problem; nor can that be attained without a knowledge of the historical background. To present a rough sketch of that background, and to analyse the constituent elements of the problem, is the purpose of this book.

I have, of course, made some use of the more accessible primary sources, of dispatches, constitutional texts, official reports, and so forth, and in addition have incurred a heavy debt to previous writers on the subject. I have avoided, as far as possible, footnotes which in a book intended not for specialists but for the general reader seem to me pretentious and superfluous. But I hope I have included in a short bibliographical appendix all the works to which I am most indebted. Should there be any omissions representing debts long ago incurred and long since forgotten I crave pardon. There are,

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however, two obligations which I must more specifically acknowledge. The first is to the works of the late Sir William Wilson Hunter, at whose feet I sat, and whose friendship I enjoyed, during the later years of his life, and whose premature death left a great work on British India less than half completed, and deprived English historical literature of what promised to be a real *magnum opus*.

I owe a heavy debt, also, to Sir William Hunter's accomplished assistant, my friend and former pupil, Mr. P. E. Roberts, now Fellow and Vice-Provost of Worcester College, Oxford. Mr. Roberts has read nearly the whole of this book in proof and I am grateful to him for several valuable suggestions, but his revision was unavoidably rapid, and for any errors which have survived it I alone am responsible. It is proper to add that I have borrowed to a small extent from two chapters in my *England since Waterloo* (Methuen & Co., Ninth Edition, 1930), and from three articles contributed in 1931 to *The Fortnightly Review*—in both cases by kind permission.

J. A. R. MARRIOTT.

January 1932.

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I

THE PROLOGUE

The Problem of India

ADMINISTRATIVE problems are part of the daily round; the common task, of every Government, be its sphere large or small, be its form autocratic or democratic. Before an Imperial Power larger problems periodically loom up, problems which go to the root of political theory, and demand a solution which must needs square not merely with theory but with fact. This is the price that must be paid for Empire. Yet it is safe to say that never before has any Power, much less a Power which counts itself an advanced democracy, been confronted by a problem so intricate and baffling as that which India to-day presents to the British people.

It is the purpose of this book to set out that problem in its historical perspective, to analyse its component elements, to show, again with reference to history, how the problem has arisen, and to examine, briefly, the proposals made for its solution.

The task confronting us is unique: alike in dimensions and complexity it is without precedent or parallel in the history of mankind. The immediate task is to devise a Constitution for a continent. That and nothing less. And we have to devise it under peculiar conditions. The structure to be erected must be a new one, planned on the very latest model. But the site on which it is to be erected is an ancient site and already crowded. A unique problem.

'In India,' as Sir John Simon has impressively pointed out, 'no one can build on vacant ground. Even when Sir Edward Lutyens and Sir Herbert Baker laid out their designs for New Delhi, there were remains of an older Delhi round about, and from the noble circular colonnade of the New Parliament House you may catch a glimpse of the deserted fortress where a Mogul Emperor died, his splendid tomb is not far off, and away on the

horizon rises the strange and impressive memorial of a more ancient rule, the pinnacle known as the Kutub Minar. Whatever, therefore, the new constitutional plan may be, it is inevitably a plan to be fitted into or superimposed upon existing foundations. . . . The present constitutional structure of India is a very complicated structure indeed—a building of many parts and varied materials, in which you may trace the influence of earlier systems of architecture, some portions expressing what is traditional to the East, as well as portions which have been boldly borrowed in recent years from the West. It is a vast edifice, with endless pillars within and buttresses without, carrying the strain of poise and counterpoise at many points, making provision for the accommodation of many diverse elements, and incapable of being wisely planned afresh unless all of us are prepared to take the trouble of studying first the structure as it now stands.¹

Another
Complica-
tion.

Though the plans must be framed in conjunction and consultation with the representatives of the Princes and peoples of India, the ultimate responsibility for adopting them lies on the Imperial Parliament, and, in the last resort, on the electorate of the United Kingdom.

Could any situation be more paradoxical—almost, were it not so grave, so appropriate to Gilbertian comedy? A western people, to whom India is little more than a name, is to be responsible for framing or approving a Constitution for 320 millions of Asiatics, living under conditions at which most Englishmen can only vaguely guess—Asiatics, who have inherited traditions wholly alien from our own, worshippers at shrines we may not enter, trained in a philosophy which few of us can even begin to comprehend, but on the other hand almost entirely untrained in those arts of self-government which are bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh.

Paradoxical, in truth, and unprecedented. The British is not, of course, the first World-Empire in history. Nor is it the first Empire to be set up by foreigners in India. On the contrary, the British Empire in India is only the latest in a long series of Empires established in that vast sub-

¹ *The Constitution of India*, p. 7.

continent by alien conquerors. None the less is it in character unprecedented. None the less is the task confronting us unique. All our Imperial predecessors have been autocracies; none of the alien Empires which have successively ruled India have depended in the last resort upon a democratic electorate, or even on a representative Parliament.

Nor have any of them ever attempted the task which now confronts us. None of them ever attempted to make a 'Constitution', either for themselves or for the Indian peoples under their sceptre. Nor—let this be emphasized—is the 'making' of Constitutions a task wholly congenial to our own traditions or our peculiar political genius.

On the contrary, our traditions, our instincts—must we say our prejudices?—dissuade us from the attempt to 'make' a Constitution. Never was there a more typical Englishman than Arthur Young, and the comment he made on the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly in the early days of the first French Revolution is eminently characteristic both of him and of his countrymen: 'Making the Constitution, which is a new term they have adopted, as though a Constitution were a pudding to be made from a receipt.' Of his experiences in Paris he wrote:

'In these most interesting discussions I find a general ignorance of the principles of government; a strange and unaccountable appeal, on one side, to ideal and visionary rights of nature; and on the other no settled plan that shall give security to the people for being in future in a much better situation than hitherto.'

Burke's judgement on the Constitution-mongers did not differ from Arthur Young's: 'among them I saw some of known rank, some of shining talents, but of any practical experience in the State not one man was to be found. The best were only men of theory.'

'Men of theory.' There was the rub. The predominant influence of philosophers and doctrinaires was the characteristic which specially differentiated the French Revolution from the Revolution which Englishmen had carried

'Making
a Constitu-
tion.'

The
English
Constitu-
tion.

through in the seventeenth-century. Frenchmen based their *Declaration of the Rights of Man* on the abstract theories formulated by that prince of idealogues, J. J. Rousseau; and to make matters worse the theories were mostly false. Englishmen built on a totally different plan; or rather they had no plan. The *Petition of Right* presented by Parliament in 1628 to King Charles I formulated, like the later *Bill of Rights*, a list of definite grievances of which the subjects of the Stuarts had reason lately to complain, and demanded the application of the appropriate remedy. That is the English way: to apply specific remedies to proved abuses. As it was in 1628 and 1689, so it had been when Magna Carta was conceded in 1215; so it was to be when the Reform Bill was carried in 1832. Thus has the English Constitution been built up bit by bit. A little repair here; an alteration there; perhaps a story added anon; but never total reconstruction in deference to some new-fangled theory, or on the advice of unpractical architects. Thus Englishmen conceived the same sort of suspicion of 'made' Constitutions, that they have of 'made' dishes; they regard both as having a 'foreign' flavour. Nor can they forget that the Constitution which Burke and Young saw in the making in France had a short and unhappy life of less than two years; or that the Constitutions which, in the course of the next eighty years, succeeded each other so rapidly, had an average life of considerably less than ten years.

Constitutional Experiments in the 17th century. 'There are other reasons for the prevalent mistrust by Englishmen of written Constitutions. In the seventeenth century we tried the experiment ourselves. But none of the Constitutions devised under the Commonwealth or Protectorate could ever be induced (in Carlyle's phrase) to 'walk'. On the other hand, the English folk have, on the whole, prospered exceedingly under a Constitution which, like Topsy, was 'never born but just grew'. Hence an obstinate prejudice in favour of the process of gradual evolution as opposed to that of scientific manufacture; a

marked preference for that type of Constitutional liberty which

broadens down
From precedent to precedent.

But if the task of Constitution-making is uncongenial to insular Britons, men of the same breed have, under different conditions, shown themselves expert in the art, and have made notable contributions to the Constitutional architecture of the modern world. The American Constitution.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century men of British blood, trained in British traditions, made a Constitution for the U.S.A. which has, on the whole, been remarkably successful. Devised 150 years ago for a country with some two million people, it has, in essential outline, stood the test of time; it has emerged unscathed from a great civil war, and has been adapted, with a minimum of friction and with few amendments, to the growing needs of more than 100,000,000 people dispersed throughout an interoceanic continent.

Again, we have co-operated with our sons in Canada and Australia, and with the English and Dutch subjects of the King in South Africa, in framing the Constitutions under which Canadians, Australians, and South Africans are severally living to-day. Dominion Constitutions.

It will not escape observation that of the four examples cited above, three represent Federal Constitutions, and the fourth—the Constitution of the Union of South Africa—though technically unitary, was the work of men imbued with federal ideas and that it embodied a considerable element of Federalism.

There is a consensus of opinion that if we are to amend the existing Constitution of British India, as embodied in the *Government of India Act* of 1919, the amendment must follow federal lines. For such a country, containing 250,000,000 people, even were the peoples homogeneous in race, in language, and in creed, a unitary Constitution, based on the principle of 'Responsibility' is not merely Federalism.

unprecedented, but evidently unthinkable. On this point the Report of the Statutory Commission is emphatic:

'To imagine that a constitutional structure suitable for 45 millions of British people, mainly urban, will serve equally well for 250 millions of Indians spread over a sub-continent and living in half a million villages is unreasonable. If self-government is to be a reality, it must be applied to political units of a suitable size, after taking into account all relevant considerations. . . . It is only in a federal structure that sufficient elasticity can be obtained for the union of elements of diverse internal constitution and of communities at very different stages of development and culture' (ii. 15).

From that judgement no one who has given any thought to the matter is likely to dissent. Nothing, indeed, was more remarkable, in connexion with the proceedings of the Round Table Conference, 1930-1, than the rapidity with which it reached the conclusion that only in some form of Federalism could a solution of the Constitutional problem be found. But if that be so, it is reasonable to suppose that the Federal Constitutions, already operating, would furnish valuable hints for the guidance of those who are charged with the immensely difficult and responsible duty of devising a Constitution for India.

Do they? How far can we draw on experience and rely on precedents?

Apart from the Latin Republics of South America which have naturally taken, for the most part, the Constitution of the U.S.A. as their model, there are only five great examples of Federal Government in the world to-day. And they are all of recent origin.

Federal-
ism in
U.S.A. The architects of the American Constitution built a new type of edifice on a virgin site. Federalism, properly understood, was born in Philadelphia in 1787. Ancient Greece had, it is true, its Leagues of City States. Medieval cities also formed Leagues to protect their commercial interests, as in the famous case of the 'Hanseatic League'. The germ of the modern Helvetic Confederation is to be found in the old League of High Germany. But Switzerland afforded a

very imperfect example of Federal Government until the formulation of the Constitution of 1848. Consequently, the only possible precedent upon which the Philadelphia Convention could rely was that of the United Provinces of the Netherlands; and, as Emile de Laveleye justly observed, that Republic was 'une fédération d'états plutôt qu'un état fédératif', or as the Germans would say a *Statenbund*, not a *Bundestat*.

Alexander Hamilton and his colleagues at Philadelphia were indeed driven to devise a *Bundestat* precisely by reason of their unhappy experience of a *Statenbund*. The *Statenbund*, or Confederation of States, called into existence by the stern exigencies of the war against Great Britain, was, with difficulty, held together during the war. No sooner was peace concluded than the loose confederation was threatened with dissolution.

'For the five years that preceded the adoption of the Federal Constitution,' wrote the late Mr. Choate, 'the whole country was drifting surely and swiftly towards anarchy. The thirteen States, freed from foreign dominion, claimed and began to exercise each an independent sovereignty, levying duties against each other and in many ways interfering with each other's trade.'

To induce these jealous and jarring republics to adopt some closer form of union was no easy task. But at last on 17 September 1787 Hamilton, Madison, Franklin, and their colleagues could announce the accomplishment of a task which is among the most memorable in the history of political institutions.

To describe the American Constitution in detail is no part of my immediate purpose.¹ There is, however, one feature of it which, in view of the task ahead of us in India, ought to be emphasized. The American Constitution is, in effect, a *Treaty* concluded between thirteen independent Republics, each intensely self-conscious of its

¹ I have done that in my *Mechanism of the Modern State*, vol. i, chapter v (Clarendon Press, 1927), and to that work I may be permitted to refer the reader.

individual identity and exceedingly tenacious of the rights of independent Statehood.

Yet the American Constitution was not, by any means, an elaborate document. It consisted of only seven articles, comprising twenty-four sections. That famous document was in truth merely the *torso* of a Constitution, the provisions of which are intelligible only if they are read in conjunction with the State Constitutions on which the Federal Constitution was superimposed and to which it is complementary. As Monsieur Boutmy has picturesquely phrased it:

'It is like a body, of which you see nothing but the head, feet, and hands, in fact all the parts that are useful in social life, while the trunk containing the vital organs is hidden from view. This essential part which is hidden, represents the constitutions of the separate States.' Jefferson, with pardonable exaggeration, went so far as to say: 'The Federal Government is only our department of foreign affairs.'

Distribu- It has now become a good deal more than that; but
tion of Jefferson's exaggeration is useful as emphasizing a feature
Powers. of the American Constitution apt to be ignored by Englishmen, who naturally think in terms of a unitary Constitution, and even by those familiar with the different type of Federalism adopted in Canada. The Federal Government of the United States was, in fact, devised only to discharge such functions as were specifically assigned to it by the Sovereign States. All the residue of functions remained and remain vested in the State Governments.

Australia. This point—the distribution of powers between the central and local governments—is an all-important one in the drafting of every Federal Constitution. By the decision reached on this cardinal point the whole character of a Federal State is inevitably determined. Australia in this respect followed the example of the United States. *The Commonwealth of Australia Act* enumerated thirty-nine matters in regard to which the Federal Legislature was to be competent to legislate. All others were strictly reserved to the States, which were not less jealous than the

American States for the rights appertaining to Sovereign Communities.

Canada decided otherwise. The *British North America Act* Canada. of 1867 enumerated sixteen subjects as being exclusively vested in the Provincial Legislatures; and although the subjects—twenty-nine in number—assigned to the Dominion Parliament were also enumerated in the Act, it was expressly stated that this was only done 'for greater certainty' but not so as to restrict the right of the Federal Parliament to deal with any matter 'not coming within the classes of subjects by this Act assigned exclusively to the Legislatures of the Provinces'.

How vital is the point as to the location of residual powers may be seen by reference to a famous judgement of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in 1913. That Judgement denied to Canada the character of a true Federal State, on the ground that the term Federal, strictly interpreted, applies only to Constitutions in which the constituent States 'while agreeing on a measure of delegation, yet in the main continue to preserve their original Constitution'. This definition would seem to be unduly restrictive; it fails to distinguish between two types of a Federal State, each equally entitled to be regarded as orthodox, though the one is predominantly centripetal, and the other centrifugal, in character.

The Philadelphia Convention, then, initiated a new Constitutional experiment. The Helvetic Confederation followed suit in 1848, Canada in 1867, the German Empire in 1871, and the British Colonies in Australia in 1900. Of these experiments in Federalism no two are exactly alike. Take the important matter of the Executive. Canada and Australia both retained in the federated State the type of Executive already familiar to the component States: they attempted in fact to reconcile the principle of Federalism with that of a Responsible or Parliamentary Executive. In the United States of America the Executive is not Parliamentary but Presidential: the President himself and the members of his Cabinet are expressly excluded from

The Executive.

the Legislature. In Switzerland the Executive is vested in a Council which though it includes the President is neither Presidential in the American sense, nor Parliamentary in the English mode. The members of the Executive Council are, in effect, the permanent heads of the administrative departments, responsible to the Legislature, taking their orders from Parliament, but not subject to the changes and chances of electoral mutations. Under the German Constitution of 1871 the Executive was vested in the Emperor to whom alone the Chancellor was made responsible. Under the Weimar Constitution of 1919 the Executive is Parliamentary, but it has yet to be proved that a Parliamentary Executive is compatible with the genius of German Federalism.

Apart from the constitution of the Executive there are many other points of difference between the Federal Governments of the modern world. To the most significant of these—the location of the residual powers—attention has already been drawn.

But while it is important to emphasize these differences, it is not less important to insist on the fact that there are certain features common to every State which is successfully operating a Federal Constitution, and certain conditions which every Federal State must needs fulfil.

Conditions of Federalism: First, it is impossible to construct a Federal State unless there exists a group of communities, so far united by blood, language, or creed, by local contiguity or political tradition, as to desire union; but not so closely connected by any or all of these ties as to be satisfied with nothing short of unity.

Secondly, it is desirable, if not imperative, that there shall be no marked inequality between the co-operating States, still less that any one of them should be sufficiently powerful to maintain its independence single-handed against foreign aggression; least of all that it should be capable of vying in strength with a number of its confederates combined against it.

Thirdly, in every Federal State there is a bicameral

Legislature, and of the two Chambers, the Upper Chamber or Senate is, as a rule, invested with the greater dignity and the more important functions. In the case of Germany, Switzerland, the U.S.A., and Australia, the Upper Chamber specifically represents the *States*; in the last three cases on a basis of equality, but otherwise in the case of the German *Bundesrat* (now the *Reichsrat*). The Canadian Senate forms an exception to the general rule. It lacks both dignity and power, and is likely to undergo amendment. In any case a strong Second Chamber may be regarded as indispensable to a Federal State.

Fourthly, hardly less indispensable is a supreme judicial tribunal, capable of acting as the interpreter of the Federal instrument, and of adjudicating on the rights of the parties to the Federal Treaty. In this matter there are differences between Federal States by no means insignificant, but too technical for discussion in the present connexion.¹

More important, however, than all these points is the position or condition of the confederating States: their previous history, the measure of their political experience, and the like. The Statutory Commission was acutely conscious of the importance of this factor in the problem confronting it in India:

Component
Units.

'... When we come to consider the constituent elements out of which the federation of British India is to be built, we are met with an initial difficulty. Federation schemes usually start with a number of clearly defined States, each already possessed of individuality and consciousness, whereas in India there are only a number of administrative areas which have grown up almost haphazard as the result of conquest, supersession of former rulers, or administrative convenience. No one of them has been deliberately formed with a view to its suitability as a self-governing unit within a federal whole' (ii. 15).

Sharply contrasted with this is the position in the Federal States we have been considering. Take, for example, the United States of America.

The thirteen American Colonies were, with all their

¹ On this see Marriott, *Mechanism of the Modern State*, II. c. 38.

variations of social type, racially and linguistically homogeneous; they inherited a common political tradition and were not fundamentally divided in religion. The Australian colonies were, in all respects, homogeneous. In Canada, there was and is a sharp line of division, racial, traditional, linguistic, and religious, between Quebec and the other Provinces; but it is located not sporadic; it does not, as in India, permeate and paralyse the whole body politic. Moreover, the component States, both of Canada and Australia, had passed through the regular stages of political evolution, culminating in full 'responsibility' before any attempt was made to federate.

Take Switzerland. The twenty-two Swiss Cantons were less homogeneous in character than the English-speaking Federations. They differed in race and language, in creed and in political traditions; but the German Cantons form the real nucleus of the Confederation, and each Canton whether German, French, or Italian, Catholic or Protestant, democratic or oligarchic, had definite characteristics of its own; each formed a natural unit and made its distinctive contribution to the Federal Commonwealth.

Finally, there is the German *Reich*. The constituent States of Modern Germany had all, with the curious and significant exception of Prussia, formed part for centuries of the Holy Roman Empire; since 1815 they had been units in a Germanic Confederation; they were ethnically and linguistically homogeneous, and the divisions between Catholics, Lutherans, Zwinglians, and Calvinists, though bitter enough in the seventeenth century, were not like the division between Hindu and Moslem, and had not greatly disturbed Germany since the Treaty of Munster (1648). Germany as a whole, moreover, is comparable not to India, but to one of the larger Provinces of that vast sub-continent.

Units of
an Indian
Federa-
tion?

The task, then, of federating India is comparable rather to M. Briand's task than to Prince Bismarck's. With this difference. M. Briand can at least start, as could Bismarck, as could Alexander Hamilton, from certain natural units.

In India they do not exist. The Federal Structure Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference recommended that the component elements of the proposed Federal structure should consist of (i) 'The Federation of Provinces of British India; and (ii) 'Such Indian States or Groups of States as may enter the Federation'. That recommendation does not carry us very far towards the solution of a difficult problem; it hardly recognizes the existence of a problem. Yet the problem is vital and the solution of it is a condition precedent to the success of any federal scheme.

It does not stand alone; relatively to some of the broader aspects of the problem, it is almost a detail, though a vital one.

At some of the broader aspects we must briefly glance. The first is the scale of the structure it is proposed to erect. India, with an area of 1,805,000 square miles, is as big as the whole of Europe proper, of Europe west of a line drawn (as Mr. Oliver would draw it) from Odessa to Königsberg; it is twenty times as big as Great Britain. Only by breaking up the aggregate into fragments can we, indeed, realize the scale of the problem which confronts us. British India is divided into fifteen Local Governments, nine of which are distinguished as Governor's Provinces. Of these the smallest, Assam (61,000 square miles) is about the size of England. Burma, the largest, is considerably bigger than France (234,000 square miles against 213,000). Bombay (195,000) is almost exactly the same size as Spain (196,000); Madras (153,000) is a good deal bigger than Italy (120,000); the Punjab (137,000), the Central Provinces (131,000), and the United Provinces (112,000) each exceed Great Britain (95,000) in size; Bengal (82,000) is rather smaller.

Of the total area of India more than one-third (700,000 square miles) lies within the boundaries not of British India but of the Indian States which, 562 in number, vary in size from States like Kashmir (84,258) and Hyderabad (82,698), which are bigger than England, down to properties of a few acres. One hundred and eight of these States are of

Condi-
tions in
India.

sufficient importance to entitle their rulers to sit, by individual right, in the Chamber of Princes.¹

**Popula-
tion.** Even more imposing than the size of the Indian sub-continent, which is, after all, smaller than Canada, Australia, or the United States, is the teeming population of which any Constitutional scheme must take account. With nearly 320 millions of people India is at least one hundred times as populous as was the United States at the time when its federal scheme was launched; it contains three times as many people as the Roman Empire at the time of its widest extension under the Emperor Trajan; it accounts for one-fifth of the whole human race to-day.

Such figures, though not easy to apprehend, are strictly pertinent to the problem under review, and in themselves constitute a factor which the constitution-builders can ignore only at the cost of the stability of the edifice which they are charged to construct.

**Racial
Diver-
sities.** With another factor—the diversities of race among the peoples of India, the non-Aryan aborigines, the Hindus, the Moslems, and the rest, it will be more convenient to deal in connexion with the successive conquests to which, during some 3,000–4,000 years, the country was periodically subjected. It must suffice for the moment to recall the words of a great student of India, Sir W. W. Hunter:

‘India forms a great Museum of races in which we can study man from his lowest to his highest stages of culture. The specimens are not fossils or dry bones, but living tribes each with its own set of curious customs and religious rites.’

A more precise analogy, perhaps, is furnished by a cliff-face in which the geological strata are simultaneously visible. But whatever the image preferred the ethnical factor is one not to be ignored in any discussion of the subject.

**Religious
Antago-
nism.** Much more important, however, is the factor of religious antagonism. By all competent testimony religion is, of all the forces operating upon Indian opinion to-day, incomparably the strongest.

¹ See *infra*, p. 287 seq.

'Within the confines of India are to be found (as a philosophical student of India has pointed out) the adherents of nine great religions, some of which are in their turn split up into almost innumerable sects, ranging from an austere monotheism to a bewildering polytheism.'¹

The Buddhists number about 12,000,000; the Christians 4,753,000; the Sikhs 3,239,000, and there is a sprinkling of other creeds; but the mass of the people are divided between the two outstanding creeds of Hinduism (216,735,000) and Mohammedanism (68,735,000). But—a further complication—the adherents of the two principal religions are very unequally distributed in the several Provinces and States.

In British India the Hindus are in an immense majority, numbering 163 millions, as against the 59½ millions Mohammedans. But in Bengal, for example, the Mohammedans claim over 25 millions out of a total of 47 million inhabitants; in the Punjab 11,400,000 out of 20 millions; and in the North-West Frontier Province over 2 millions out of 2,250,000. In the Indian States, as a whole, the Hindus outnumber the Mohammedans by 53½ millions to 9½ millions. But the Mohammedans are in a majority in Kashmir, where the ruler is a Hindu, while in Hyderabad, where the ruler is a Moslem, the Hindus claim 10½ millions out of 12½ millions.

Statistics give unfortunately only the faintest idea of the problem presented by religious differences. An Englishman who finds himself in Belfast on 12 July is apt to be startled by the Orange demonstrations. But those demonstrations, though they are the outward expression of deep religious fissures, are almost entirely orderly and in the main good-humoured. Far otherwise is it with the divisions between creed and creed in India. On this point the Statutory Commission, albeit still with studied moderation, insist with unusual emphasis:

'It would be an utter misapprehension to suppose that Hindu-Moslem antagonism is analogous to the separation

¹ Lord Zetland, *India*, p. 15.

between religious denominations in contemporary Europe. Differences of race, a different system of law, and the absence of inter-marriage constitute a far more effective barrier. It is a basic opposition manifesting itself at every turn in social custom and economic competition, as well as in mutual religious antipathy. To-day, in spite of much neighbourly kindness in ordinary affairs, and notwithstanding all the efforts made by men of goodwill in both communities to promote Hindu-Moslem concord, the rivalry and dissension between these two forces are one of the chief stumbling-blocks in the way of smoother and more rapid progress' (i. 25).

To the abiding truth of these words recent events have borne distressing testimony.¹ But the Cawnpore outrages, though exceptional in degree, are unhappily far from exceptional in kind. So deep is the fissure between these two historic religions that a distinguished Hindu has actually suggested the reference of the problem to the League of Nations.

'The Hindu-Moslem problem', writes Mr. Vijayaraghavachari, 'has been found to be too tough to be settled by the people of this country. Past experience shows that it is not easy for us to solve it in the near future. On the other hand there is no near chance of the powers that be enabling us to reach a satisfactory solution. Without a solution of this important problem it is admittedly impossible to establish Dominion Status, much less absolute independence in our country and to successfully maintain the same. . . . The League of Nations is the best and perhaps the only tribunal that can settle this question to the satisfaction of all parties in India.'²

Whatever may be thought of the specific proposal, the reasons advanced in support of it contain a sufficiently striking admission, particularly as coming from a Hindu, of the intractable nature of the 'minority' problem. The Moslems, though incomparably the most powerful and important, are not, of course, the only 'minority' in India. The Buddhists, over 96 per cent. of whom are to be found

¹ Written in May 1931.

² *The Hindu of Madras*, 2 March 1929, quoted *op. Craddock, The Dilemma in India*, pp. 363-4.

in Burma, number 11½ millions. The Sikhs, who belong almost entirely to the Punjab Province, number something less than 3½ millions, but it is, as the Statutory Commissioners point out, 'a striking circumstance that this small community contributed no less than 80,000 men to serve in the Great War—a larger proportion than any other community in India.'

'The numbers of the Sikh community have', add the Commissioners, 'grown rapidly in the last thirty years, and the concentration of this vigorous element with its strong communal attachments in the single Province of the Punjab is a fact of great political importance. The Christians number nearly 5 millions, but of these a large proportion (1,726,000) are in the Indian States. The Parsees, though numbering only 88,000 (in British India), are a highly intelligent and exceedingly prosperous community. Most of them live in Bombay City, and they have contributed largely to make of that city a centre of finance, commerce, and culture.'

Another ingredient in the complicated problem of India Caste. is Caste. A recent census enumerated no fewer than 2,300 castes among the Hindu population of India. On this topic alone volumes might be, and indeed have been, written. The Statutory Commission approached this delicate question with characteristic caution, and any Englishman who approached it incautiously would proclaim himself incompetent to approach it at all. Yet, even at this preliminary stage of our inquiry, one consideration obtrudes itself and seems to call for passing mention. The Hindus are the protagonists in the struggle for political 'rights'; the demand for the establishment of parliamentary democracy comes primarily from them. But caste is the soul of Hinduism. This truth is emphasized by the Statutory Commission:

'In spite of the eagerness with which political India is embracing modern ideas of government, the ancient social system of Hinduism which has evolved a rigid complication of innumerable castes, from the Brahmin at the top to the Pariah at the bottom, continues to control the lives and thoughts of more than two hundred out of the 320 millions of the population of

India with a persistence and authority undreamed of in the Western World' (i. 10).

It may well be, as the Commission elsewhere point out,¹ that there are at work influences—social, economic, and political—which are tending to sap the rigidity of the caste system. Nevertheless, it would be worse than affectation to ignore the plain truth that the caste system is both philosophically and practically incompatible with any species of 'democracy'.

Lan-
guage,
Literacy,
and Edu-
cation. To the cleavage of caste we must add the cleavage of tongues. The last census enumerated no fewer than 222 recognized vernaculars, belonging, as the highest authorities have pointed out, to six distinct families of speech. Assam, as already mentioned, is the smallest of the Governor's Provinces and contains only about 8 million people. Yet in that Province alone the people speak 98 different tongues.²

Among the languages spoken in India much the most important—the only one which is important in a political sense—is English. It is true that out of 320 million people, only 2½ millions (16 males and 2 females per thousand) reach the low standard demanded for 'literacy' in English. Only 22½ millions can read and write any language. Nevertheless, relatively few as are the English literates, they are the only persons who are politically conscious. Indian 'nationalism' is almost entirely the product of English education; the medium of almost all political discussion is necessarily English.

Of Indian education something must be said hereafter. In this preliminary analysis it must suffice categorically to say that but for the momentous decision announced by Lord Macaulay in his famous minute of 1835, to make English the medium of Higher Education in India, there would be no 'problem' of India to be solved by us to-day; there would be no 'India' to present a problem.

¹ Cf. in particular i. 36 seq.

² Lord Zetland, *India*, p. 16.

Allied to the factor of education is that furnished by social and economic conditions. In no respect is the contrast between England and India sharper than in this. England is a rich country; its people dwell in towns, and live almost entirely by industry and commerce. India is a poor country, over 70 per cent. of the inhabitants are engaged in agriculture and are dispersed in half a million villages. In the whole of India there are only thirty-three towns with more than 100,000 inhabitants, as compared with forty-nine in Great Britain. A large proportion of the population is still miserably poor; not many years ago, many millions of them were said to be 'struggling to live off half an acre apiece'.

Yet poor as they are, they would be much poorer but for the devoted labours, during the last three-quarters of a century, of British administrators, British engineers, and British soldiers—not to add but for the contributions of British capitalists.

In the sphere of Economics as in that of education it is the English in India who are mainly responsible for the genesis of the problem which now confronts and perplexes them. A recent commentator has blurted out the plain truth:

'Probably a hundred million of the total present population of India would never have existed at all if British rule had not come in to close down wars, suppress crime, relieve famines, construct irrigation works, make railways, fight epidemics, supply waterworks and thus open the way for better health and for investment of capital in larger industry.'¹

Thus does Nemesis wait on benevolence. In men, in material, in politics, in philosophy, in literature, in everything for which she herself stands, England has given to India of her best. She has done it, be it frankly said, not only for India's sake (though that consideration has been ever predominant), but for her own reputation in the world. However distasteful (if we may believe Macaulay),

¹ Craddock, *Dilemma in India*, p. 27.

however 'difficult' to the average Englishman the subject of India may be, he cannot forget that discriminating foreigners have repeatedly warned him that by his government of India he shall be judged when he comes to appear before the tribunal of impartial History. 'There never has been', wrote De Tocqueville, 'anything so extraordinary under the sun as the conquest and still more the government of India by the English; nothing which from all points of the globe so much attracts the eyes of mankind to the little island whose very name was to the Greeks unknown.' The gaze of mankind has not been withdrawn, though the exact nature of the problem now emerging may be hidden from their eyes. Not even to all Englishmen is it plain. It is the purpose of the pages that follow to elucidate it. The first condition of comprehension is a knowledge of its genesis.

II

THE GENESIS OF THE PROBLEM

The Indian Background

THE subject of this book is not the History of India but the History of the *English in India*. The position of the English in India, the problems now presented to them for solution cannot, however, be apprehended without a sketch of the Indian background, of the history of the Indian peoples, before the advent of the European traders.

The last word must be emphasized. It was as traders, not as colonists or settlers, that the English went to India. Consequently the problem presented to an Imperial race by India is wholly different from that which the same people have to solve in their self-governing Dominions or in their Colonies proper. India is not a British Dominion, though some Indians aspire to 'Dominion status'. India is not, it never has been, and never could be a British Colony. A land teeming with a vast indigenous population could not, apart from climatic disqualifications, offer a field for the expansion of the English, or any other European race. As will presently be explained the English East India Company was originally established solely to promote trade. Drawn irresistibly into the maelstrom of Indian politics the English gradually established their superiority over other European competitors and finally found themselves, almost as it seemed against their will, in a position of paramountcy among the Indian Powers. They remain in India to-day as the latest of a long series of conquering invaders. They have given to India, what none of their predecessors did, internal peace, external security, and an enlightened and superbly efficient¹ administration. Nevertheless it were affectation to deny, and dangerous to

¹ I use the word 'efficient' with hesitation, after an authoritative warning that next to 'sympathy', efficiency is the most unpopular word an Englishman can use in India.

forget, that their power has rested, and rests, as did that of all their predecessors, upon the sword—not necessarily or solely upon the swords of Englishmen, but still upon a sword. If ever that sword be allowed to rust, dominion in India will pass to others who can wield it.

The India, then, to which, in the seventeenth century, Englishmen went, was teeming with peoples. Who were they? Whence came they? We remained in India as conquerors. Whom did we conquer, and how? Without an answer, however brief, to these questions there can be no comprehension of the problems which now confront us. To supply it is the purpose of this chapter.

Non-
Aryan
Abori-
gines. The Indian peoples of to-day are compounded, as we have seen, of many races which, for the most part, represent the 'deposits' (if the word may be used) left by the invasions, conquests, and submersions of the past. Of these movements, dim though the details in certain cases are, History can generally give some account. But there is a substratum of people in India, constituting perhaps some 10 per cent. of the whole, of whose origin we are wholly ignorant. The dawn of History discloses them in possession, and so we may call them 'aborigines', but whence they came, or when, we can only guess. They belong to a non-Aryan race, and in physical type are small, dark, snub-nosed, and consequently are clearly distinguishable from the Hindus. They are now to be found among the Andaman islanders, the hill-tribes of Southern Madras, in the Central Provinces, and among the foot-hills of the Himalayas. Some of the non-Aryans of Madras helped us in the conquest of Southern India; some of them fought with us on the field of Plassey, while the Gurkhas, who also belong to the non-Aryan race, have covered themselves with glory in many of our recent wars.

The
Hindus. With the Hindu invasions we get on to solid historical ground. During the period extending from 1500 B.C. until nearly A.D. 1000 these Aryan folk came in vast hordes from the highlands of Central Asia—the common breeding-ground of the Indo-European races—pouring through the

north-western passes in successive waves. They drove the aborigines into the mountain fastnesses, but in all the long centuries of their supremacy they never established, so far as history records, a consolidated Empire, or anything resembling a regular or centralized administration. Yet they reached a high stage of civilization: they created a beautiful language and a noble literature; they evolved a system of philosophy which ranks among the greatest achievements of the human mind; but they were not (in Aristotle's sense) 'political animals'. Nevertheless, despite this apparently inherent disqualification, they were politically ascendant in India for 2,000-3,000 years; and though their ascendancy passed to others, to Afghans, Mongols, and finally to the British, their religion, their philosophy, and their social organization have survived all conquests, and exist in their integrity to-day.

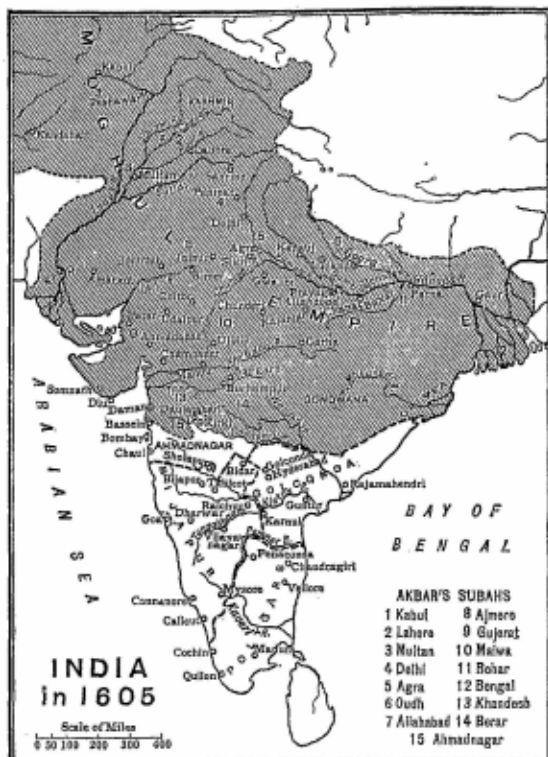
After the Hindus, the Moslems. We may ignore, for the purposes of this rapid sketch, the Persian conquest of the Indus valley in the time of Darius (about 500 B.C.), and the much more imposing conquest of Alexander the Great, who (327 B.C.) subdued the whole of the north-western part of Hindustan; we may ignore also the succession of Scythian inroads, though these covered a period of 600 years (100 B.C. to A.D. 500). None of these left any perceptible impress upon India.

Far otherwise was it with the great Mohammedan or Moslem conquests.

Mohammedan invasions of India began in A.D. 664, only thirty-two years after the death of the Great Prophet, the founder of Islam; but these earlier invaders left no permanent results. The first Mohammedan conquerors of India were the Turks of Ghazni. About A.D. 1000 the great conqueror Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni led the first of his seventeen expeditions into India. A century and a half later came the Afghan conquerors (*circa* 1175-1206) who established their ascendancy over all the northern plains of India, from the Indus to the Brahmaputra. In the fourteenth century the Afghan dominion extended to the Deccan.

The
Moslems.

The
Afghan
Empire.



Timur (Tamerlane) made his famous invasion of India in 1398, but Timur, great warrior though he was, left no impression behind him.

We may pass on, therefore, to the invasion of Baber (1525), by whom the Afghan Empire was finally overthrown. The supremacy of the Afghans had never, indeed, been complete or unquestioned. Like the greater Mogul Empire which succeeded it, the Afghan Empire had been perpetually harassed by attacks from three different quarters. Hinduism had never been entirely subdued, much less obliterated, by the Afghans. Hindu Princes still continued to rule over considerable areas of India. Nor could the Afghan Sultans of Delhi effectually control their own Mohammedan Viceroys in those more distant Provinces which nominally owned their sway. But the gravest menace to the continuance of their ascendancy was the nearest and the most familiar. They proved unable to repel the attacks of the fresh hordes of Mohammedan invaders who periodically swept down from the Asian highlands on to the plains of northern India, through the tempting passes of the Himalayas. To the latest of these attacks they eventually succumbed.

It was led, as we have seen, by Baber (1482-1530). Baber proved himself more than a mere conqueror. He was a statesman of no mean calibre, and he it was who established that Mogul Empire which maintained its supremacy in India for about two centuries, which is still largely represented among the ruling Princes of India, and has bequeathed to its successors in title a problem of the first magnitude. Long before that problem assumed its present significance, the last of the Mogul Emperors, Bahadur Shah, who had momentarily emerged during the mutiny of 1857, died at Rangoon (1862), the pensioner and prisoner of the British Government.

About Baber and the Empire he founded even the average Englishman, thanks to Macaulay and his magic pen, knows something. The passage in the Essay on Clive, describing the Mogul Empire, is among the most charac-

teristic and most familiar in all Macaulay's writings. Yet the temptation to quote a few of those majestic sentences is irresistible:—

'The empire which Babér and his Moguls reared in the sixteenth century was one of the most extensive and splendid in the world. In no European kingdom was so large a population subject to a single prince, or so large a revenue poured into the treasury. The beauty and magnificence of the buildings erected by the sovereigns of Hindustan amazed even travellers who had seen St. Peter's. The innumerable retinues and gorgeous decorations which surrounded the throne of Delhi dazzled even eyes which were accustomed to the pomp of Versailles. Some of the great Viceroys who held their posts by virtue of commissions from Mogul ruled as many subjects as the King of France or the Emperor of Germany. Even the deputies of these deputies might well rank, as to extent of territory and amount of revenue, with the Grand Duke of Tuscany, or the Elector of Saxony.

'There can be little doubt that this great empire, powerful and prosperous as it appears on a superficial view, was yet, even in its best days, far worse governed than the worst governed parts of Europe now are. The administration was tainted with all the vices of Oriental despotism, and with all the vices inseparable from the domination of race over race. The conflicting pretensions of the princes of the royal house produced a long series of crimes and public disasters. Ambitious lieutenants of the sovereign sometimes aspired to independence. Fierce tribes of Hindoos, impatient of a foreign yoke, frequently withheld tribute, repelled the armies of the government from the mountain fastnesses, and poured down in arms on the cultivated plains. In spite, however, of much constant maladministration, in spite of occasional convulsions which shook the whole frame of society, this great monarchy, on the whole, retained, during some generations, an outward appearance of unity, majesty, and energy . . .'

Akbar. The zenith of energy and majesty was reached during the reign of Akbar the Great (1556-1605). His reign was almost exactly coterminous with that of our own Queen Elizabeth, and as a ruler he was not unworthy of comparison with the Tudor sovereign. He succeeded to a

kingdom less extensive than the present Province of the Punjab; he bequeathed to his son, the Emperor Jahangir, something which was more like an all-Indian Empire than anything which India ever knew until the days of Lord Dalhousie. Great in war, Akbar was still greater in counsel, supremely able as an organizer, and gifted with nothing less than genius for conciliation. It was by conciliating the Hindus, as much as by successful war, that his Empire was extended and consolidated. His favourite wife was a Rajput princess, and he employed Hindus as well as Moslems in the service of the State. He respected both the opinions and the laws of the Hindus, though he refused to countenance their cruel rites. To all his subjects, whatever their creed, he extended complete civil and religious equality. He executed impartial justice and maintained a police system remarkably efficient for those days. His Empire eventually extended from the heart of Afghanistan to the Vindhya mountains, and was organized in fifteen Provinces, each under a Viceroy, whose work was scientifically differentiated in three departments, financial, judicial, and military. For revenue purposes he compiled a comprehensive Domesday Survey, which not merely gave to the cultivators of the soil an assurance of security and a guarantee against the extortions of subordinate officials, but brought in a large and regular revenue to the Imperial treasury.

Akbar's son and successor, the Emperor Jahangir (1605-27), added little to the extent and nothing to the glory of the Empire, but his grandson, Shah Jahan, outshone in splendour and renown even Akbar himself. The Empire was, indeed, shorn of some of its Afghan possessions, but its authority was extended in Southern India, while as the builder of the Taj Mahal at Agra and the Imperial palace at Delhi, Shah Jahan made a more splendid contribution to the architecture of India than any ruler before or after him.

With the reign of his son and successor Aurungzeb (1658-1707) decomposition rapidly set in. The outward pomp

and magnificence of the Empire suffered, indeed, no diminution; the conquest of the Mohammedan kingdom of the Deccan, begun by Aurungzeb as his father's lieutenant, was slowly but surely completed by him as Emperor. But though the splendour of the Empire was apparently undimmed, the seeds of irreparable decay were sown. Aurungzeb's rule was as bigoted and oppressive as Akbar's had been tolerant and conciliatory. His personal life would have been (as Sir W. Hunter cynically remarks) a 'blameless one had he had no father to depose, no brethren to murder, and no Hindu subjects to oppress. But his bigotry made an enemy of every one who did not share his own faith; and the slaughter of his kindred compelled him to entrust his whole government to strangers.'

Hindu Revival. The most ominous feature of his reign was the extraordinary revival of Hinduism. Not even at the zenith of the Mogul Empire had Hinduism, as already observed, ever been obliterated. Akbar's success was in large measure due, as we have seen, to his wise policy of conciliation. But in the reign of Aurungzeb, the Hindus found a great leader in Sivaji, who welded the Maratha chieftains into a powerful confederacy and began seriously to threaten the supremacy of the Moslems. The Rajput States also combined against Aurungzeb, and the Sikhs (a military and religious sect of Hindus), were rapidly establishing themselves as a considerable power. François Bernier, a Frenchman who was Court physician to Aurungzeb in the early years of the reign, has left a vivid account of the condition of the Empire at that time.

'The Great Mogul', he wrote, 'is a foreigner in Hindusthan; consequently he finds himself in a hostile country, or nearly so, containing hundreds of Gentiles (Hindus) to one Mogul, or even to one Mohammedan. . . . The Court itself does not now consist, as originally, of real Moguls, but is a medley of Usbeks, Persians, Arabs, and Turks or descendants from all these people. . . . The country is ruined by the necessity of defraying the enormous expenses of a numerous Court, and to pay a large army maintained for the purpose of keeping the people in

subjection. No adequate idea can be conveyed of the sufferings of the people.'

Of the state of the country nearly a century later (1753) we have a much more particular account from the pen of Robert Orme, a friend of Clive, and himself a member of the Council of Madras.

'Whoever considers the vast extent of the Empire of Indostan, will easily conceive, that the influence of the Emperor, however despotic, can but faintly reach those parts of his dominion which lay at the greatest distance from his capital. This extent has occasioned the division of the whole Kingdom into distinct provinces, over each of which the Mogul appoints a Vice Roy. The Vice Roys are, in their provinces, called Nawabs; and their territories are again subdivided into particular districts, many of which are under the government of Rajahs. These are the descendants of such Hindu Princes, who, before the conquest of the Kingdom, ruled over the same districts. . . . Even this appointment of Vice Roys was found too weak a representation of the royal power in the extreme parts of the Kingdom; to which orders from the court are three months in arriving. This insurmountable inconvenience occasioned the subjecting several provinces, with their distinct Nawabs, to the authority of one, who is deemed the highest representative of the Mogul. Princes of this rank are called *Subas*. Nizam-ul-Mulk was *Suba* of the Deccan (or southern) provinces. . . . *Diwan* comprehends in his person the offices of Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor, and Secretary of State. . . . The superiority of their numbers in every province of Indostan may have first given rise to the custom of devolving the office of *Diwan* upon a Hindu: and the sense of their superior industry and abilities may have confirmed this custom.'

During the half-century which intervened between the death of Aurungzeb (1707) and Clive's momentous victory at Plassey (1757) the dissolution of the Mogul Empire had proceeded at an accelerated pace. The Empire, itself the victim of an internal malady, was assailed externally from all sides. The sovereignty of Delhi became little more than

¹ Orme, *Historical Fragments of Indostan* (quoted *op. Muir, Making of British India*, pp. 25-9).

nominal. Ambitious Viceroys wrested all real power from the feeble hands of the degenerate descendants of Akbar and Aurungzeb. The Moslem Viceroy of the Deccan, the famous Nizam-ul-Mulk, set up an independent throne at Hyderabad (1720-48). About the same time the Governor of Oudh, himself the Vizier of the Emperor, converted that Province into a virtually independent sovereignty. Bengal was wrested from the Empire by an Afghan adventurer. The Sikhs from the north-west and the confederated Marathas from the south-west began simultaneously to close in upon the doomed Empire of the Moguls. To this general defection within the Empire was added the menace of invasion from without. The expulsion of Aurungzeb's garrisons from Kabul and Kandahar reopened to invading armies the historic route through the Himalayas. In 1739, the Persian conqueror, Nadir Shah, burst through the Afghan passes, sacked the Imperial city, massacred its inhabitants, and carried back with him booty of untold value.

Upon the heels of the Persian came the Afghan. Six times between 1747 and 1761 did Ahmad Shah, of the famous Durani House, lead his fierce Afghans on to the plains of northern India, pillaging, laying waste, and massacring in all directions. In 1752 the Punjab was wrested from the feeble grasp of the Mogul; Delhi itself was again stormed and sacked in 1756; and the Holy Places of the Hindus were despoiled and outraged. A great part of northern India, but lately densely peopled, was silent as the desert.

Such was the chaos which prevailed in Indian politics when the situation was transformed by the intrusion of a new element. For a century and a half European merchants—Portuguese, Englishmen, Dutchmen, and Frenchmen—had been busily establishing their 'factories' or commercial settlements on Indian soil. Not, however, until the middle of the eighteenth century did they begin to play any important part in the confused politics of that

harassed land. The English and the French, having by that time outdistanced all European rivals, plunged into the native contests as auxiliaries, and then began to engage in a duel as principals.

The circumstances which led to this amazing situation demand detailed examination.

III

WEST AND EAST

The Opening of the Sea-paths. Europeans in India (1497-1740)

FOR countless generations the rich plains of Northern India had offered to the restless peoples of Central Asia an irresistible temptation. Hindus, Afghans, Moguls, in one long succession, year after year, century after century, had poured through the passes of the Himalayas into the valleys of the Indus and the Ganges. To such invasions India was only too well accustomed; but at the end of the fifteenth century it was confronted with a wholly new phenomenon. A fleet manned by European sailors appeared for the first time in Indian waters.

The Ottoman
Turks. How and why had it come? The answer to that question has frequently been given in a single sentence: the capture of Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks. But the historian is bound to suspect such facile and picturesque explanations. Nevertheless, the answer points to an important truth. Certain specific dates eloquently testify to a general movement of supreme significance. Christopher Columbus led his first expedition from Spain in 1492. In 1497 John Cabot sailed from Bristol, and in the same year Vasco da Gama for the first time rounded the Cape of Good Hope. What had led Spain, England, and Portugal to embark upon these simultaneous adventures? This outburst of maritime activity—apparently sudden and certainly significant—was due to a combination of causes, scientific, religious, commercial, and geographical. But it was the advent of the Ottoman Turks into Europe, their capture of Constantinople in 1453, and the extension of their conquests in the course of the next half-century, throughout the eastern Mediterranean, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, that brought matters to a head. The conquering Turk had practically blocked all the great commercial

routes along which, for thousands of years, the commodities of the East had reached the marts of Western Europe.

Of those routes three were specially important. The oldest was the Syrian route, which from the dawn of authentic history had been in the hands of the Semitic races. The complete capture of the Syrian route forms, as a brilliant writer has said, 'the mercantile epic of Israel'. It was from the Chaldean or Euphrates end of the route near the Persian Gulf that Abraham started; four generations later his descendants were settled at its south-western terminus on the Nile. From the Israelites the command of this route passed in turn to the Egyptians, the Syrians, the Persians, to Macedon, and ultimately to Rome.¹ In the fifteenth century this route was virtually blocked by the advent of the non-commercial Turk.

Trade
Routes.

The second or Northern route, which made its way by the Oxus and across the Caspian to the Black Sea, found its outlet into Western Europe by the narrow straits and was commanded therefore by Constantinople. In 1453 Constantinople was conquered by the Ottoman Turks, and that route also was blocked.

The third or Southern route, starting from India and making its way to Europe by the Red Sea and the Nile, was also gravely threatened by the growth of the naval power of the Ottomans, who in 1499 inflicted a signal defeat on the Venetians at Lepanto, and was finally blocked by the Turkish conquest of Egypt in 1516. Thus, in the first years of the sixteenth century, as Sir William Hunter has graphically said, 'the Indo-European trade of the Middle Ages lay strangled in the grip of the Turks'.

The European peoples thus found themselves faced by two alternatives: either to go without the luxuries which had become almost necessary and were obtainable only from the East, and incidentally to forgo the large profits which had accrued to them from Eastern trade; or to discover new routes which were not blocked or dominated by

The Por-
tuguese
Empire.

¹ Hunter, *British India*, i, chapters i and ii.

the Ottomans. Impelled by the several motives which combined to produce the geographical renaissance of the fifteenth century, they naturally chose the latter alternative. 'The history of Modern Europe and emphatically of England is the history of the quest of the aromatic gum resins and balsams and condiments and spices of India, further India, and the Indian Archipelago.' Sir George Birdwood's statement is summary, but hardly exaggerated. That quest was undoubtedly one of the most powerful motives that inspired the adventures of Columbus, of Vasco da Gama, and the Cabots. But it was not the only one—religious zeal mingled with commercial ambition. All these men went forth to seek a new route to the East and so to turn the flank of the Mohammedan intruders. Only Vasco da Gama found what they all sought. It was entirely fitting that the glory of the discovery should have fallen to the Portuguese. The geographical configuration of Portugal, with its long littoral and its splendid harbours, invited its people to oceanic adventure. Laborious scientific research, initiated by Prince Henry the Navigator and patiently pursued for a hundred years, equipped them to take advantage of their natural opportunities. Their age-long crusade against the forces of Islam, as represented by the Moors, supplied another and perhaps more compelling motive for their maritime enterprises. 'We come to seek Christians and spices.' So said the first of Vasco da Gama's sailors to land in India. That landing was, however, only the climax of nearly a century of geographical discoveries. From the beginning of the fifteenth century the Portuguese mariners had been making a series of voyages which had yielded rich scientific and practical results. They discovered Madeira in 1419, the Azores in 1448; in 1463 they landed in Sierra Leone; they discovered the Congo in 1484, and three years later Bartholomew Diaz reached the southernmost limit of South Africa at the Cape of Good Hope. Ten years later an expedition led by Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape itself and sailed by way of Mozambique to India, landing in Calicut after a voyage of eleven

months, on 20 May 1498. The landing of the Portuguese on the Malabar coast marks one of the most significant turning-points in modern history.

'When the Portuguese', writes Sir George Birdwood, 'at last, rounding the Cape of Good Hope, burst into the Indian Ocean like a pack of hungry wolves upon a well-stocked sheep walk, they found a peaceful and prosperous commerce, that had been elaborated during 3,000 years by the Phoenicians and Arabs, being carried on along all its shores. The great store cities of this trade were then at Calicut, Ormuz, Aden, and Malacca.'

In those commercial entrepôts were collected the 'cloves, nutmeg, mace, and ebony of the Moluccas', camphor from Borneo; gums, spices, silks, and perfumes from China, Japan, and Siam; rubies from Pegu; diamonds from Golconda; pearls, sapphires, topazes from Ceylon, and a hundred other costly commodities conscientiously catalogued by Birdwood. From Ormuz, he proceeds to point out, they 'were transported in ships up the Persian Gulf and river Euphrates, and by caravans on to Aleppo and Damascus, and Trebizond, whence they were distributed all over Asia Minor, and Southern and Western Europe, and throughout Muscovy. The merchandise collected at Aden was sent on to Tor or to Suez, and thence by caravan to Grand Cairo, and down the Nile to Alexandria, where it was shipped to Venice and Genoa, and other ports of the Mediterranean.'¹

For almost exactly one hundred years, throughout the whole of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese enjoyed a virtual monopoly of the commerce of the East. But their commercial supremacy was due solely to sea-power.

'The actual achievement of Portugal in Asia was not', writes Hunter, 'a land empire but the overlordship of the sea. Her sphere of influence stretched eastwards across the vast basin six thousand miles from the African coast to the Moluccas, and northward four thousand miles from the Cape of Good Hope to the Persian Gulf. Her political frontier . . . was not defended by rivers or mountains. It was the open edge of the ocean following, at the height of the Portuguese power, a sinuous

¹ *Records of the East India Company*, p. 165.

route from Natal north-east to Ormuz, from Ormuz south-east to Cape Cormorin, from Cormorin north-east again to Bengal, then south-east to Malacca, Java and the spice islands, a jagged semicircle of over fifteen thousand miles. That a small European nation, then numbering perhaps not more than a million of souls, should continue to hold this frontier, was impossible when stronger European rivals came upon the scene. That Portugal should have held it for a century against the Musalman world is an enduring glory to herself and to Christendom.¹

It was held entirely by sea-power. The possessions of Portugal in India, and indeed throughout the East, were practically confined to 'patches on the seaboard'. But the whole of the vast route was commanded by squadrons which were based on Diu, Ceylon, and Malacca.

After one century of ascendancy, the Portuguese yielded pride of place to the Dutch. That Portugal should have retained her supremacy even so long as that may seem remarkable, but it is explicable partly by her own pre-eminence in scientific research and maritime enterprise, partly by the condition of European politics in the earlier years of the sixteenth century. Spain, the only real rival of Portugal, was, in Europe, deeply and almost continuously engaged in a duel with France; in the colonial field her energies were concentrated on the West Indies and South America. The sun of Venice and Genoa had set; that of England had not yet risen. England was, as we shall see, quite unready for oversea enterprise. The Dutch Republic had not come into existence.

The last years of the sixteenth century wrought a wonderful change in the situation. They witnessed the birth of the Dutch Republic and the rapid rise of the sea-power of England. Apart, however, from the advent of dangerous rivals in Eastern waters, there were reasons inherent in the colonial Government of Portugal which would have rendered permanent success impossible. An Englishman may be forgiven for saying that to understand the miracle of England's achievement in the East, it is only

¹ *Op. cit.* i. 134.

necessary to read the history of the Portuguese Empire, and to analyse the causes of its downfall. Portugal was, in truth, carrying on in India its unabandoned crusade against the forces of Islam. The Portuguese went to India to 'seek Christians', or rather to make them by force; and their proselytizing fanaticism, the cruelty of the methods of the Inquisition, contrast sharply with our own scrupulous respect for the religions of those who ultimately became our subjects in India. There have been, indeed, moments in the history of British rule in India upon which no Englishman can look back without regret, but if cases of venality and corruption were disclosed from time to time among certain officials of the East India Company, such abuses pale into insignificance compared with the persistent corruption which was from first to last characteristic of Portuguese officials. Portuguese India did not, indeed, lack, from time to time, the service of devoted and distinguished proconsuls, among whom Almeida and Albuquerque stand out pre-eminent; but their tenure of office was severely limited, their power was restricted, the Crown not only retained in its own hands the supreme direction of policy, but reserved to itself the profits of all the more lucrative branches of commerce. Under no circumstances, however, could the Portuguese supremacy in the East have been indefinitely prolonged. The European position of Portugal rested on too narrow a basis. The Mother state had neither the political vigour nor the financial resources necessary for the maintenance of a great Asiatic Empire. But the final cause of the downfall of the Portuguese Empire in the East was the loss of the political independence of European Portugal. In 1580 Portugal was absorbed into the Spanish monarchy, and its commerce and shipping were consequently exposed to the attacks of the enemies of Spain.

'The union of the crowns of Spain and Portugal'—once more to quote the words of Hunter—'was to the Protestant sea powers of the sixteenth century what the closing of the eastern land routes by the Turks had been to Christendom in the

fifteenth. Again the great necessity arose for a new departure in Indo-European commerce. Portugal was dragged at the heels of Spain into her suicidal struggle with the Reformation, and the Catholic monopoly of the Indian trade went down with the Armada in the English Channel and the North Sea.'

Dates again speak eloquently. The Armada was fought in 1588; in 1589 Queen Elizabeth was petitioned to issue a licence for direct trade with India; in 1591 an English squadron under the command of Captain James Lancaster rounded for the first time the Cape of Good Hope, and reached the coast of India; in 1599 a body of London merchants founded the East India Company.

English enterprise belated. Why, it may well be asked, was the advent of English sailors and traders in the East so long delayed? It was more than a hundred years since Cabot had sailed from Bristol to discover, if it might be, a north-western passage to the Indies. He did in fact discover Newfoundland, and explored the American coast from Labrador to Virginia. But his enterprise was stillborn: his initial successes were not followed up. There were, indeed, sporadic expeditions under the early Tudors, but until Queen Elizabeth was firmly established on the throne, nothing effective in the matter of maritime adventure was accomplished.

Nor are the reasons far to seek. England was not ready in the last years of the fifteenth century to enter on the path of maritime enterprise. She had not yet become a seafaring nation. Her external trade was negligible. Her population was scanty. She had no regular navy before the days of Henry VIII, nor was the deficiency supplied by a mercantile marine. The dynastic wars, the social disorders, and the weak government of the fifteenth century had left her politically distraught and economically anaemic. It needed many years of Tudor discipline to restore her to economic health and political vigour. For England's belated appearance in the colonial field there was, however, another and compelling reason. By the famous bull issued by Pope Alexander VI in 1493 all discoveries in the New World were assigned to Spain and

Portugal. So long as England remained in Catholic obedience she was, at least technically and theoretically, excluded from the monopoly enjoyed by those countries. It was the Reformation which brought both England and Holland into competition with the Catholic powers, and it was the lure of the East which brought them into conflict with each other.

'Spacious' is the commonly applied epithet to the times of Queen Elizabeth. And it is eminently appropriate. The awakening of England's interest in Eastern trade was only one of many manifestations of the wonderful outburst of national energy characteristic of the latter years of the sixteenth century. Nor is the outburst to be explained by any single cause. Yet among a multitude of causes which inspired the English people with a new spirit and gave to England a position in the world to which she had never before aspired, one stands out pre-eminent. The blocking of the old trade routes due to the advent of the Turks combined with the simultaneous discoveries of Columbus, Vasco da Gama, and Cabot to revolutionize geographical conditions and give a wholly new bias to commerce and politics. Hitherto the Mediterranean and the cities on its shores had formed the hub of the universe. Constantinople, Tyre and Sidon, Alexandria, Carthage, Rome, Venice, Genoa—these were the great entrepôts of medieval trade. The events summarized above left them high and dry; the Mediterranean became a backwater; commercial supremacy passed to the countries on the Atlantic sea-board; as Venice and Genoa and Constantinople waned, Lisbon, Bristol, London, Amsterdam waxed.

By this geographical revolution England was ultimately the chief gainer; but for reasons already examined, she was not ready in the sixteenth century to utilize the opportunity thus opened to the nations of western Europe.

The Portuguese were the first to establish a great European Empire; to that Empire it was not the English but the Dutch who succeeded.

The peoples of the Low Countries had long been in-

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terested in Eastern trade. Bruges was the northern Emporium to which the commodities from Eastern lands had found their way from Venice and Genoa. In the fate of those cities Bruges also was involved, and as Lisbon supplanted the Italian ports, Bruges surrendered pride of place to Antwerp. In the middle years of the sixteenth century no fewer than 20,000 persons in Antwerp were in the employ of English merchants. But Antwerp was destroyed during the Spanish Fury (1576-85), and trade and traders migrated to Amsterdam, whence the Dutch merchants, excluded by the Spaniards from Lisbon, opened for the first time direct trade with the East.

The rise of the Dutch to a position of maritime and commercial supremacy was extraordinarily rapid. Nor are the reasons far to seek. Dutch greatness was the child of Spanish bigotry and oppression. In revolt against Spain, and in reaction against the principles of Spanish policy, the people of the United Provinces embarked on their independent national career. The expedition of De Houtman, who in 1595 sailed for the Far East in command of four Dutch vessels, was the first of many. His return to Amsterdam after two years' absence fired the popular imagination, and between that date and 1601 no fewer than fourteen voyages to the East were undertaken by an aggregate of sixty ships. The Dutch privateers, like the Elizabethan sea-dogs, had discovered the weak spots in the maritime equipment of Spain; the capture of Spanish galleons yielded rich rewards to the adventurous seamen not only of Plymouth, but of Amsterdam. 'Free Trade' was a doctrine which commended itself no less to Dutchmen than to Englishmen. Nor did Dutch Calvinists, any less than English Protestants, forget to carry the Bible in one hand, if they carried a cutlass in the other.

Holland, however, started its Indian trade under much better auspices and on a much bigger scale than England. As Hunter picturesquely phrases it:

'The English Company was the weakling child of the old-age of Elizabeth and of the shifty policy of King James: the Dutch

Company was the strong outgrowth of the life and death struggle of a new nation with its Spanish oppressors.¹

A great victory of the Dutch fleet over the Portuguese near Bantam (1602) opened out the road to the Far East; five years later the Dutchmen inflicted an equally crushing defeat on the Spaniards off Trafalgar; they conquered the Moluccas and Java in 1607, and in 1619 fixed their Eastern head-quarters at Batavia. In 1641 they took Malacca from the Portuguese, who, having in the previous year regained their political independence, signalized its recovery by surrendering to the Dutch their exclusive claims over the Spice islands. From the trade of those islands all Europeans, and in particular the English, were henceforward to be excluded. The supremacy of the Dutch in Eastern waters was further emphasized and guaranteed by the conquest of Ceylon (1638-58), and by their occupation of the Cape of Good Hope (1652), pusillanimously abandoned by James I in 1620.

Between the English and Dutch there was, throughout the whole reign of James I, keen rivalry in the East. But Dutch enterprise was on an altogether larger scale and was much more adequately supported by the Government than our own. The total number of English ships dispatched to the East was, up to 1610, only seventeen. The Dutch in the same period sent out 134. The wrongs inflicted on English merchants and sailors by the Dutch in the East Indies were the subject of frequent and bitter complaints to the Government. But the feeble protests of James I were unheeded at Amsterdam. From 1610 onwards there were, as one authority expressed it, 'continuous negotiations in Europe, continuous contests in the East.' The English contended for the policy of the 'open door'; the Dutch, with tiresome reiteration, insisted that 'the commerce of the Moluccas, Amboyna, and Banda should belong to the [Dutch] Company and that no other nation in the

Anglo-Dutch Rivalry.

¹ i. 351, and cf. (p. 334) list of Spanish voyages quoted from *Les Premiers Voyages des Néerlandais dans l'Insulinde (1598-1602)* par Prince Roland Bonaparte.

East should possess the least part.' On leaving his post in 1623 Jan Pieterszoon Coen, the greatest of all the Dutch Governors in the East, enjoined his countrymen 'not to trust the English any more than as open enemies . . . not weighing too scrupulously what may fall out'.

Massacre
at Am-
boyna.

The injunction did not fall on deaf ears. Quite otherwise. In February 1623 the unequal struggle in the Spice islands was ended by the 'massacre' of Amboyna. The English settlement in that island (one of the Moluccas) was on a modest scale, but, though the stage was contracted, the tragedy was grim. The eighteen Englishmen on the island were arrested on a trumped-up charge by a subordinate Dutch official, and after hideous and revolting tortures, Towerson, the chief agent, and nine others were put to death.

When, eighteen months later, news of the tragedy reached England, a cry of execration arose, but King James, though promising to obtain speedy reparation, was anxious to cement an alliance with the United Provinces against Spain, and did nothing. Charles I was never in a position to extort from foreigners respect for the rights of Englishmen. Accordingly it was not until thirty-one years after the tragedy that reparation was extracted from the Dutch, who paid a sum of £85,000 as indemnity to the Company and £3,615 to the heirs of the victims. The man to extort the reparations was not a Stuart king but Protector Oliver. Amboyna, with the rest of the Dutch possessions in the East, was captured in the course of the Napoleonic wars (1810) but, with the exception of Ceylon, they were restored after the Peace.

The massacre of Amboyna had momentous results. The Dutch remained masters of the Eastern Archipelago, and drew from their commercial monopoly vast profits: the English were driven to the mainland of India and thereafter concentrated their attentions on that vast sub-continent.

English
traders in
India.

For ten years or more the chief factory of the English Company was at Surat, high up on the Malabar Coast.

But in 1611 an agency was established on the Coromandel coast at Masulipatam, which in 1632 was raised to the rank of a Presidency. Seven years later a site was purchased from the local Rajah on which the Company built Fort St. George and thus laid the foundations of the Presidency of Madras. All the possessions of the Company remained, however, officially subject to Bantam until 1653 when Madras was erected into a separate Presidency.

Meanwhile, the position of the Company on the western coast was notably improved. The marriage of Charles II with Catherine of Braganza brought Bombay into the possession of the Crown. Bombay was at that time no more than a dirty little fishing village, planted on an exceedingly unhealthy site, and the King was glad to sell it to the East India Company for an annual rental of £10. Bombay, however, had one great advantage over Surat; it was less exposed to the raids of the terrible Marathas, and, accordingly, in 1687 the capital of the Western Presidency was transferred from Surat to Bombay.

Agencies depending on Surat had, some years previously, been opened at Ajmeer, Agra, and Patna (1620). Twenty years later a factory was established at Hooghly, and in 1681 Bengal was separated from Bombay. As yet, however, the Company had no territorial footing in Bengal and were, therefore, entirely at the mercy of the native governors. In 1686 the Nawab ordered all the English factories in Bengal to be confiscated, and the merchants consequently moved down the river from Hooghly and laid the foundations of Fort William. Job Charnock, who was then President of Bengal, purchased some of the adjoining villages from the Mogul Emperor, and on that site the great city of Calcutta was subsequently built. Thus, by the close of the seventeenth century the Company had obtained a footing, destined to be permanent, in the three great Presidencies of modern India: Madras, Bombay, and Bengal.

Down to this time the Directors in Leadenhall Street had not conceived any idea of territorial sovereignty in

Policy of
the Com-
pany.

India. Their agents in the East were traders pure and simple, without the ambition or the force to embark on the turbid sea of Indian politics. They continued therefore to defer to the advice given by Sir Thomas Roe, who in 1615 had carried out a successful mission as Ambassador to the Court of Jehangir, the Mogul Emperor, with whom he had arranged a commercial treaty.

'By my consent', wrote Sir Thomas, 'you shall never engage yourselves but at sea, where you are like to gain as often to lose. The Portuguese, notwithstanding their many rich residencies, are beggared by keeping of soldiers; and yet their garrisons are but mean. They never made advantage of the Indies, since they defended them. Observe this well. It has also been the error of the Dutch, who seek plantations here by the sword. They turn a wonderful stock; they prole in all places; they possess some of the best, yet their dead pays consume all the gain. Let this be received as a rule, that if you will profit seek it at sea and in quiet trade, for without controversies it is an error to affect garrisons and land wars in India.'

No doubt admirable advice. But quiet trading was rendered impossible for the Company by the attacks of the Marathas and the financial extortions of the agents of the Great Mogul. The Directors accordingly decided on a new departure. They resolved to strengthen the position of the Company in India by the acquisition of territorial sovereignty. They solemnly recorded their intention of making the Company a 'nation in India' and with this end in view appointed Sir John Child as Governor-General of all the English settlements in the East. Child's position was the more authoritative since his brother,¹ Sir Josia Child, was a most important member of the Board in England and four times held office as Governor. It was Sir John Child who decided on the important step of making Bombay the chief seat of the Company in India (1687).

¹ *D.N.B.* (s.v.) states that the two Childs were brothers, but Strachey (*Keigwin's Rebellion*, App. A) claims to have proved that they were not even related. Anyway, they were very closely associated in Indian business.

About the development of the Company more will be said in a later chapter. We must first deal with a critical episode in the history of British power in India. The Company, as we have seen, had already been exposed to competition from the Portuguese and the Dutch. They had also incurred some opposition from the native Powers, but it was not until well on in the eighteenth century that they came into contact, and eventually into conflict, with the European Power destined to prove their most serious rival for supremacy in the Far East.

IV

THE ANGLO-FRENCH DUEL

Dupleix and Clive

The French in India.
 THE French were relatively late in following their European neighbours to the East. In 1611 a French Company was, however, formed and was endowed with the monopoly of Eastern trade for a period of twelve years. But France made little of it. A voyage was undertaken in 1615, but got no further than Madagascar, where some years later a settlement was effected under the auspices of Cardinal Richelieu. It was not, indeed, until the direction of commercial affairs passed into the strong hands of Colbert that any progress was made. In 1664 that great minister started a new Company on much more ambitious lines. It was solemnly declared not to be derogatory for nobles to engage in commerce with the Indies; the State was to advance to the Company three millions of francs, and to guarantee them against loss for ten years; the Company was to enjoy entire jurisdiction over Madagascar and all other territories which might be occupied by its servants, and the State undertook to back them with all the military and naval power of France. But despite State encouragement the initial settlement in Madagascar proved a complete failure, and after some years the few survivors migrated to the Isle of Bourbon and the Isle of France (the Mauritius). Meanwhile, a second expedition dispatched by Colbert under the command of a Dutchman, François Carron, established the first French factory on the continent of India at Surat. Two years later a Firman was obtained from the King of Golconda, allowing the French to trade freely in his territories and to establish a factory at Masulipatam. An attempt was made in 1672 to effect a settlement in Ceylon, but the Dutch easily repelled it and an assault on Trincomalee was no more successful. Two years later land was purchased from

the Governor of the Carnatic and on that site the foundations of Pondicherry, destined to be the capital of the French settlements in India, were laid. The little colony was threatened by the Marathas, but managed to survive not only the attacks of those fierce warriors, but the bitter antagonism of the Dutch, and by the beginning of the eighteenth century the French were firmly established, not only at Pondicherry, Masulipatam, and Surat, but also in Bengal, where they had formed a settlement at Chandernagore on the Hooghly—about twenty-two miles above Calcutta. Further security was given to the French possessions in India by the occupation of the Isle of France (1690) and the Isle of Bourbon (1720).

In 1735 there was appointed to the governorship of Pondicherry a man of resource and energy, M. Dumas. The administration of Dumas was rendered memorable by the fact that he was the first European Governor in India to enter into close political relations with the native Powers. In 1738 he sent an armed force to the support of one of the pretenders to the throne of Tanjore, and was rewarded by the acquisition of the town of Karikal and some adjoining territory, thus obtaining for the French a footing in Tanjore.

More significant was the fact that when in 1740 the Marathas invaded the Carnatic and slew the Nawab and his sons, the new Governor Chunha Sahib fled with his wife and family and put themselves under the protection of the French at Pondicherry. The Marathas then swept down upon the French settlement and demanded the surrender of the fugitives. To their amazement the demand was contemptuously refused by Dumas, who successfully defended the fort against the repeated attacks of the Maratha chieftains. This bold defiance of Maratha power created an immense impression throughout India, and the Mogul Emperor marked his sense of its significance by investing M. Dumas with the rank and title of Nawab. Dumas accepted the honour only on condition that it might be transferred to his successor.

Dupleix. That successor, François Dupleix, was the most brilliant proconsul who ever served France in India. He at once proclaimed himself Nawab in succession to Dumas, and began to assume something of the state befitting an official of high rank in the Empire, now little more than a phantom, of the Great Mogul. His policy in this and similar matters has evoked the criticism of such a high authority as Sir Alfred Lyall. 'Dupleix', he writes, 'made the commonplace mistake of affecting ostentatious display and resorting to astute intrigues in his dealings with the Indians; whereas the European should meet Orientals not with their weapons but with his own.' Macaulay also speaks of Dupleix as 'a vainglorious Frenchman, loving to display his greatness with arrogant ostentation before the eyes of his subjects and his rivals'. Whether it was mere childish vanity or a mark of profound policy is a question still open to dispute. There can, however, be no question that the policy was crowned with unqualified if transitory success.

The position attained by the French company under Dupleix, more particularly in view of their late arrival on the Indian stage, was, indeed, nothing short of amazing.

Anglo-
French
Rivalry.

The English traders had down to this time played no part in the domestic politics of India. Harassed, like other traders, by the attentions of the Marathas, they had generally deemed it the more prudent part to purchase immunity from their attacks. Nor had any collision as yet occurred between the English and French Companies. The world-wide duel between England and France reached a climax, however, between the years 1740 and 1763, and that duel inevitably extended to India. In 1746 a French fleet, commanded by La Bourdonnias, the French Governor of Mauritius, appeared off the Coromandel coast; Peyton, the English commander, after an indecisive engagement, slunk off to Trincomalee, leaving Madras completely at the mercy of La Bourdonnias, to whom it was tamely surrendered on 21 September 1746. The English traders then called upon the Nawab for the assistance promised against the first aggressor, but a force

which he dispatched to their assistance was utterly defeated in an engagement fought near St. Thomé. That memorable battle, as one of Clive's biographers points out: 'completely altered the relations between the Europeans and the native princes, and paved the way for the ambitious schemes of Dupleix. The superiority of disciplined troops to native levies was firmly established and the European traders who previous to the battle had been despised as inferiors, were after it regarded as equals, to be at once courted and feared'.¹ The position of the English was, on the contrary, altered greatly for the worse. Admiral Boscawen, in command of a powerful fleet, appeared off the Coromandel coast in 1748; Pondicherry was invested, but the siege was conducted without vigour and Boscawen was compelled to abandon the attempt. This lamentable failure still further diminished the repute of the English traders, while Dupleix was able to boast to his native allies that he had repulsed the most formidable expedition ever sent by a European power to India. Fortunately, at the end of 1748, news arrived that peace had been concluded between France and England, and, to the infinite disgust of Dupleix, Madras was handed back to his English rivals.

His energies were only diverted into another channel: he decided to employ the considerable force under his command in India in the mercenary service of native rulers. The death of the Nizam-ul-Mulk, the great Viceroy of the Deccan (June 1748), and the disputes which immediately ensued both in the Deccan itself and in the subordinate province of the Carnatic, offered Dupleix exactly the opportunity he wanted. Nor did he fail to seize it. He espoused with enthusiasm the cause of Muzzaffar Jang, one of the candidates for the Viceroyalty of the Deccan, and that of Chunda Sahib who aspired to be Nawab of Arcot. With his powerful aid his candidates were eventually established at Hyderabad and Arcot respectively. But real power had passed from the Viceroy and the Nawab to the

¹ Sir Charles Wilson, *Clive*, p. 19.

great French proconsul who had championed their cause. In order to proclaim the fact to the Moslem world the ceremony of installing the new Nizam was performed not at Hyderabad, but in the French capital of Pondicherry. The sequel shall be told in words which, familiar as they are to every schoolboy, it were sacrilege to paraphrase. 'Dupleix dressed in the garb worn by Mohammedans of the highest rank entered the town in the same palanquin with the Nizam and in the pageant which followed took precedence of all the Court.' This was only the prelude to the drama.

'He was declared Governor of India from the river Kistna to Cape Comorin, a country about as large as France. . . . He was entrusted with the command of 7,000 cavalry. It was announced that no mint would be suffered to exist in the Carnatic except at Pondicherry. A large portion of the treasures which former viceroys of the Deccan had accumulated found its way into the coffers of the French governor. . . . Dupleix now ruled 30 millions of people with almost absolute power. No honour or emolument could be obtained from the Government but by his intervention. No petition unless signed by him was perused by the Nizam. . . . Dupleix was now the greatest potentate in India. His countrymen boasted that his name was mentioned with awe even in the chambers of the palace of Delhi. The native population looked with amazement on the progress which in the short space of four years a European adventurer had made towards dominion in Asia.'¹

The fortunes of the French were now at their zenith; those of the English at the nadir.

Clive. At this moment, however, there appeared on the scene a young Englishman destined not only to win for himself imperishable fame, but to lay broad and strong the foundations of the British Empire in the East. Robert Clive had

¹ Macaulay, *Essay on Clive*. Macaulay's estimate of Dupleix's position is, of course, grossly exaggerated. Cf. for correction, Roberts, *Hist. Geog. of India*, pp. 107-12, and (even more significant as coming from a countryman) Caltru's *Dupleix* (pp. 257-8): 'le titre était vague et magnifique; il pouvait avoir ou non de la valeur, suivant que le titulaire était fort ou faible, vaincu ou victorieux, mais c'est seulement dans les environs de Pondichéry, à vingt ou trente lieues que Dupleix put l'exercer quelquefois.'

entered the service of the Company as a writer in 1743, and was consequently a witness of the humiliations of his countrymen at the hands of Dupleix. He promptly determined to exchange the pen for the sword, and having obtained a commission as ensign in 1747, took part in the Siege of Pondicherry (1748), where he displayed not only conspicuous courage but no little aptitude for his new profession.

Clive was, indeed, the first Englishman to show a real grasp of the crisis which confronted the English traders in India. The particular incidents of the confused fighting in Southern India are relatively unimportant; the question really at issue was which of the two Companies—the English or the French—was to become paramount in the politics of the sub-continent. More even than that. The struggle between the Companies in India had, as will be shown, more than a local significance. Far more was at stake even than the future of India. But it is with India that we are immediately concerned.

The turning-point in the Anglo-French duel in Madras was Clive's famous capture and subsequent defence of Arcot (1751). The story has been told a hundred times and the details need not detain us. Enough to say that Clive's brilliant feats of arms transformed the whole situation. The spell which Dupleix had laid on the peoples of Southern India was broken. He was shamefully supported from home, and French influence in Southern India, though not finally annihilated until the days of the brothers Wellesley, waned as rapidly as it had waxed. In 1754 Dupleix was recalled to France, and was allowed to die, ten years later, in undeserved neglect and poverty. The reception which awaited Clive, when in 1753 he returned to England, contrasted happily with the ingratitude which France showed to his rival. Nevertheless, he decided to settle down at home and embark upon a political career. He was returned for the Borough of St. Michael's, Cornwall, but (fortunately for his country) was unseated on petition. Disgusted by this mishap and straitened in means, he returned to

India as Governor of Fort St. David in 1755. He had hardly settled down to his work when news reached him from Bengal that caused the pulse of every Englishman in India to quicken with a passion for vengeance on the notorious Siraju-d daula.

Siraju-d daula. A youth of eighteen, Siraju-d daula, had in 1756 succeeded his grandfather as Nawab of Bengal, Orissa, and Behar. This young ruler, an oriental despot of the worst type, detested the English traders and determined to root them out like vermin. At the head of a great army he marched on Calcutta; most of the English traders, including the Governor and Military Commandant, fled in panic down the river; the remnant, 146 in number, were compelled to surrender the Fort and were thrust into the dungeon, memorable in history as the Black Hole of Calcutta. The story of that tragedy has been told once for all by Macaulay, and need not be retold.

Plassey. Within forty-eight hours of the reception of the news in Madras, an expedition was planned, and in December 1756, with Clive at its head, reached Bengal. The native garrison which held Fort William was routed; Calcutta was recaptured; Hooghly was stormed and sacked. Siraju-d daula sued for peace, but no sooner was it conceded than he began to intrigue with the French at Chandernagore. Clive, without a moment's hesitation, determined to strike home. He marched at once on Chandernagore, captured fort, garrison, and stores, and by one vigorous stroke decided the question of supremacy as between England and France in Bengal. He then proceeded to deal firmly with the perjured Nawab. At the head of only one thousand Europeans and two thousand Sepoys he encountered the great army of Siraju-d daula, some seventy miles north of Calcutta, and there on 23 June 1757 the future of Bengal, if not of India, was decided on the famous field of Plassey. Clive then marched on Murshidabad, the capital city of the Nawab, put his own puppet, one Mir J'afar, on the throne, extracted large compensations for the English traders in Calcutta, and marvelling afterwards at

his own moderation, accepted for himself a gratuity of £200,000. The gratitude of Mir J'afar was evanescent. He soon began to intrigue with the Dutch traders in Chinsura, who summoned their friends from Batavia to chastise and expel the English intruders from Bengal. Things turned out otherwise. The Dutch force was routed by Clive; Chinsura was compelled to surrender at discretion; its fortifications were destroyed; and the Dutch were henceforward permitted to remain in Bengal only on English sufferance. So much had Clive accomplished in three short years. His puppet reigned at Murshidabad; the European rivals of the English company had been crushed: the French at Chandernagore, the Dutch at Chinsura; while the terror of Clive himself and his troops had become the most potent political force in India. In 1760 Clive returned home.

Meanwhile the great world conflict between England and France, known to history as the Seven Years' War, had broken out (1756). That war decided the fate of three continents: Europe, Asia, and America. On all three fields the French were beaten by the English, with the help—in Europe—of Frederick of Prussia. We must concern ourselves only with India. On the outbreak of the war Count Lally had been sent out from France to renew in the Carnatic the contest which, since the recall of Dupleix, had been permitted to subside. At first Lally carried everything before him. Fort St. David was captured, Madras was besieged, and Arcot was retaken for the French. But all this was a mere flash in the pan. Writing to Pitt in January 1759, before the siege of Madras had been raised, Clive said:

The
Zenith of
the Con-
flict.

'Notwithstanding the extraordinary effort made by the French . . . I am confident before the end of this year they will be near their last gasp in the Carnatic, unless some very unforeseen event interpose in their favour. The superiority of our squadron and the plenty of money and supplies of all kinds . . . are such advantages as, if properly attended to, cannot fail wholly effecting their ruin in that as well as in every other part of India.'

No man living could better appreciate the spirit which this letter breathed than the man to whom it was addressed. Clive's confidence was amply justified. Colonel Eyre Coote was appointed to the command of the English troops in Madras and, on 21 June 1760, inflicted a crushing defeat on Lally at Wandiwash. A year later Pondicherry itself, the seat of the French Government in India, was compelled to surrender. Coote's victories decided the fate of Southern India, as those of Clive had decided that of Bengal. By the final treaty of peace concluded between England and France in 1763, Pondicherry was indeed restored to the French, but only as a commercial settlement. Henceforward, the French were not permitted to retain any military establishments in India; the possibility of their political ascendancy was at an end. Thirty years later Napoleon indulged in the dream that, with the help of the rulers of Mysore, he could turn back the tide of history. An attempt to achieve that end was actually made, but it was defeated, as we shall see, by the brothers Wellesley, and England's position in the Far East was never afterwards assailed by any European Power.

Reasons for English success. Nor are the reasons for the success of England in the world duel obscure. They may be summed up in four words: Leadership, Finance, Government, and above and beyond all, Sea-Power. The Anglo-French struggle in India affords only a particular, though striking, illustration of the general causes which were operating to secure the triumph of England. Dupleix's success, if brilliant, was transitory, and Sir Alfred Lyall has advanced substantial reasons for doubting whether in any event it could have been otherwise.

'Some writers', he says, 'have attributed vital importance to the desultory skirmishes and small though sharp battles between the French and the English in Southern India. . . . I do not believe that the issue of the contest between France and England for the gates of India hung upon any such nice balance of accident or opportunity. It was the defeat of the French by sea and land during the Seven Years' War, the disorder of

their finances and the rise of our naval superiority that cut the roots of the French power in India, where it had never been planted very deep, and the main reason why the Frenchman was fairly overthrown in the last grapple on the Indian Coast was that the English had their feet firmly planted in Bengal.'

On the plains of Northern India, not in the heel of the peninsula, the fate of India has always been decided. Dupleix made a cardinal blunder in looking for the key of India in Madras; Clive sought and found it in Bengal.

For the success of England and the failure of France in India there was yet another reason. It is to be found in the contrast between the position and policy of the French Company and the English. In order to appreciate the significance of this contrast it is necessary to examine in more detail the history of the English Company.

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY (1600-1784)

Trade and Politics. The Company and Parliament

'THE constitution of the Company began in commerce, and ended in Empire. . . . In fact the East India Company in India is a State in the disguise of a merchant.' Thus did Burke, when opening the impeachment of Warren Hastings, describe in words both picturesque and precise the position of the East India Company.

In the preceding chapters we have sketched the course of the contest between four countries of western Europe for ascendancy in the East. We must now retrace our steps, and see how the English Company, established in 1600, came to be involved in so gigantic an enterprise.

If India, as has been said, resembles a museum, the present chapter may be regarded as a catalogue of its anatomical department. That department contains mostly constitutional dry bones, but the dry bones shall be exhibited scientifically to illustrate a process of evolution.

For two and a half centuries India was technically governed by a trading Company with its head-quarters in the City of London. The history of that Company falls naturally into three periods. (1) The first extends from the formation of the Company in 1600 down to the acceptance by Clive of the *Diwanni* of Bengal in 1765. During that century and a half the Company was concerned almost exclusively with commerce. (2) The second period extends from 1765 down to the passing of the *Regulating Act* (1773). The acceptance of the *Diwanni*, or financial administration of Bengal, meant that the Company had definitely entered on the field of Indian politics. The *Regulating Act* marks the real beginning of Parliamentary interference in Indian Government. From 1773 down to 1784 there intervened a transitional period which

was ended in the latter year by the passing of Pitt's famous *India Act*. (3) The Act of 1784 established what was known as Dual Government in India—a partnership which, as time went on, inured to the advantage of the junior as against the senior partner in the firm. From 1784 onwards the Company in Leadenhall Street was confined to commercial affairs; political control passed to a Ministerial Board responsible to Parliament. The commercial monopoly of the Company was finally abolished in 1813, and its Charter was renewed for the last time in 1853. After the mutiny (1857) the Company was wound up, and in 1858 British India passed under the direct government of the Crown.

On 24 September 1599 there was held at Founder's Hall perhaps the most memorable of the many memorable meetings which have been held in the city of London. A body of London merchants, assembled under the presidency of the Lord Mayor, resolved to form an Association for promoting direct trade with the East Indies and to apply to Queen Elizabeth for her royal assent to a project 'intended for the honour of their native country, and the advancement of trade and merchandise within the realm of England, and to set forth a voyage this year to the East Indies and other islands and countries thereabouts'. A sum of £30,133 6s. 0d. was promptly subscribed by 101 parties in amounts varying from £100 to £3,000, the latter sum being set down against the names of Messrs. Corkrain & Co. Fifteen 'Committees' or Directors were appointed to regulate the projected voyage, and Sir Thomas Smith, Alderman of the City of London, was elected as the first Governor of the Company.

Founda-
tion of
John
Com-
pany.

It was further resolved to petition the Queen to grant to the Company a 'privilege in succession' and to incorporate its members in a company 'for that the trade with India being so far from hence cannot be traded in but in a joint and a united stock'.

A Charter was accordingly granted by the Queen on 31 December 1600. The Charter incorporated George, Earl of 1600.

The
Charter
of 1600.

of Cumberland, Sir John Harte, and Sir John Spencer, Knights, of London, and 214 others, by the name of the Governor and Company of Merchants of London, trading in the East Indies, and licensed them 'at their own adventures, costs and charges, as well for the honour of this our realm of England as for the increase of our navigation and advancement of trade and merchandise, to set forth one or more voyages to traffic with any countries, islands, or ports beyond the Cape of Good Hope to the Straits of Magellan, *not yet occupied by any friendly power.*' (The italicized words are important. They mean that Protestant England was no longer to be bound by the Papal Bull assigning a monopoly to Spain and Portugal and would henceforward respect only 'effective occupation'.) The Company was to have continuous succession and a Common Seal, and was empowered to sue and be sued, &c.; a Governor and twenty-four Directors (known as *committees*) were to be annually elected and to have the direction of the Company's voyages, and the handling and managing of all other things belonging to the Company. The Company was, moreover, empowered to 'hold Court and there to make or revoke laws and ordinances and impose pains, punishments and penalties so long as such laws and punishments were reasonable and not contrary to the laws, statutes and customs of this our realm'. The grant was to be in the first instance for fifteen years, renewable for a further term but determinable on two years' notice if the concession proved not to be profitable to the Crown and to the realm. The concession was 'exclusive', i.e., it was intended to confer a monopoly, though the Company might grant sub-licences to trade. The original Charter also contained minute details as to the financing of the voyages, but it is noticeable that it omitted any provision as to capital, and as to the amount of individual contributions or shares. There was, indeed, no common capital or dividend: each member traded on his own capital and at his own risk.

Chartered Companies. The terms of this Charter and the position thus conferred upon the East India Company are, for more than one

reason, of special significance. On the one hand, the Company stands in the direct line of succession to the medieval guilds with their power to admit apprentices and so on; in another aspect, it is the forerunner of the modern limited liability company; but in particular it is the lineal progenitor of the large family of Chartered Companies which have played so conspicuous and important a part in building up the commercial and imperial greatness of the British race. The Charters shortly afterwards granted to the Virginia Company, to the Hudson Bay Company, and others, were largely modelled on the East India Company's Charter of 1600. The device of the Chartered Company was severely denounced by Adam Smith and fell into disfavour during the supremacy of the Manchester School; but it was revived in the last decades of the nineteenth century and was largely instrumental in the development of British power in tropical Africa and elsewhere. In this connexion it would be interesting and instructive to compare in detail the Charter outlined above with those which were granted to the British East Africa Company in 1888 and to the South Africa Company in 1889.¹ Here it must suffice to say that the later Charters differed from the earlier chiefly in the refusal of any trading monopoly, and in the emphasis laid on the paramount position of the Crown. At every point, and in particular in regard to external relations, the control of the Crown, exercised, of course, through the Secretary of State, is specifically secured. The later Charters also contain precise stipulations as to the treatment of the natives—the prohibition of trade in liquor, and of any form of labour restriction approximating to conditions of slavery. Such provisions reflect the temper which pervades the administration of the modern State. Humanitarian legislation and the exaltation of bureaucratic control are alike typical of advanced civilization.

To return to the East India Company. For some years ^{Early} its object was purely commercial, and its operations, ^{voyages.}

¹ The texts will be found in Hertslet, *Map of Africa by Treaty*, vol. i, pp. 345 and 271.

though not unremunerative, were on a modest scale. Between 1600 and 1612 it organized nine 'separate voyages' to the East. This term means that a body of subscribers was got together and ships were chartered for each expedition, and on the conclusion of it the profits were distributed and the accounts were closed. After 1612 this system was modified to the extent that 'capital' was raised for a term of years, and after 1661 the whole thing was reorganized: the Company was placed on a joint-stock basis with regular shares which were bought and sold, as they are bought and sold on the Stock Exchange to-day.

Meanwhile, the Company had passed through many vicissitudes of fortune. Apart from the precarious gains derived from attacks on Portuguese carracks, the legitimate profits of trade were often very large. For instance, cloves which in 1606 were bought in Amboyna for £2,948 were, two years later, sold in London for £36,287. Profits frequently ranged from 400 to 1,500 per cent. The first two voyages showed a net profit of 95 per cent.; the third and fifth no less than 234 per cent., and the seventh and eighth were well over 200 per cent., the average for the first nine voyages being 152 per cent.¹ But if the profits were large the risks were great. The two ships sent out on the fourth voyage in 1608 were both wrecked. So discouraged were the members of the Company that some of them were inclined to wind up their affairs and drop the whole business.

Recon-
struction
1609.

In 1609, however, the Company was reconstructed. James I renewed the Charter in perpetuity, subject only to the provision that it might be determined with three years' notice, on proof of injury to national interests. The list of members to whom this new Charter was granted included men of the highest eminence in the State and of great influence at Court. It was headed by men like Robert, Earl of Salisbury, the High Treasurer of England, Charles, Earl of Nottingham, the High Admiral, the Earl of Worcester, Master of the Horse, and other peers, knights,

¹ Details in Hunter, I, c. vii.

and gentlemen. In 1615 the Company was empowered to issue commissions for the exercise of criminal jurisdiction, subject to a proviso requiring the verdict of a jury in capital cases, and in 1621 the Company issued something in the nature of a code of laws.

So great was the prosperity of the Company under Charles I that in 1635 that monarch, doubtless in consideration of large loans, which were never repaid, issued a licence to a rival association headed by Sir William Courteen, a Flemish silk merchant, resident in London. The monopoly of the original Company was seriously menaced, and in the social dislocation caused by the Civil War it nearly foundered. Voyages were discontinued, and in 1649 a resolution was passed to close the factories in the East, recall the agents of the Company, and wind up its business. Happily this resolution was not carried out; the agents mostly remained at their posts, and maintained themselves by private trade until the troubles at home were over. When, in 1657, Cromwell renewed the Charter, the Company absorbed Courteen's bankrupt association and resumed its monopoly.

After the Restoration a new era of prosperity set in. One of the first acts of Charles II was to renew the Charter of the East India Company, and to invest it with new and important powers. Except that the joint-stock principle was definitely recognized by giving each member one vote for every £500 share of capital, the commercial constitution of the Company was not materially altered. But its political powers were substantially enlarged. The Company was empowered to appoint governors and other officers for the government of its fortresses in the East, and to invest them with extended jurisdiction, both civil and criminal. More than that, the Company was authorized to fit out ships, with armament, munitions, and crews, for the defence of their factories, and to appoint Commanders with power to make war or conclude terms of peace 'with any people that are not Christians, in any place of their trade as shall be for the most advantage and benefit of the said Governor

Charter
of 1661.

and Company, and of their trade; to erect fortifications, supply them with provisions and ammunition "duty free" and enlist men and send them out to defend them'. The construction of a dockyard at Deptford, begun in 1609, greatly facilitated the building of the famous 'East Indiamen' which soon began to extort respect for the Company's flag in Eastern waters.

End of Portuguese ascendancy. The days of Portuguese supremacy were, as already indicated, at an end. The Armada had dealt the Portuguese a mortal blow, and from that time onwards their enterprise in the East degenerated into 'unrestrained buccaneering'. In 1612 Captain Thomas Best, with only two ships under his command, had fought a great fight with them off Swally at the mouth of the Surat river. The Portuguese had four ships mounting 120 guns, with twenty or thirty frigates, but after a month's hard fighting, the Portuguese were put to flight, and Best reopened communications with the English factory at Surat.

Three years later the fight was renewed, on the same spot, by Captain Nicholas Downton, who with only four ships engaged and scattered a great Portuguese armada, carrying 2,600 Europeans and 6,000 natives, and 234 guns. Henceforward we had nothing to fear from Portugal on the coasts of India. In 1622 the capture of Ormuz, the great naval base established by the Portuguese on the Persian Gulf, completed their discomfiture. The superiority of the English Company was finally asserted, and in 1654 Portugal, having previously recovered her independence, concluded with the English Commonwealth a treaty which recognized the accomplished fact and conceded to Englishmen the right to reside and trade in all her Eastern possessions.

The Portuguese Empire in the Indies was at an end."

The results of the contest between the English and the Dutch in the East Indies have already been described.

Bombay. The Company of London merchants was evidently moving fast towards the establishment of an Asiatic Empire. The pace was quickened by the sale, already mentioned,

of the 'Island and Port of Bombay' to the Company by Charles II. That important territorial cession was soon followed by the grant of further powers and enlarged jurisdiction. Thus the Charter of 1669 'authorized the Company to take into their service such of the King's officers and men as were on the island of Bombay, when it was handed over by the Crown; to make laws and ordinances for the government of their new possessions; to maintain justice and enforce order. The Charter of 1677 gave them the right to coin money; that of 1683 the power to raise armed forces, exercise martial law, and establish an Admiralty Court; that of 1687 the quasi-regal prerogative of establishing a Municipality and a Mayor's Court at Madras. Well might Burke, reviewing this period, say that the Company seemed to be 'not . . . merely a Company formed for the extension of British commerce, but in reality a delegation of the whole power and sovereignty of this kingdom sent into the East.'¹

The Revolution of 1688 reacted unfavourably upon the position of the Company. As a result of that Revolution sovereignty passed from a personal monarch to the King-in-Parliament.<sup>Revolu-
tion of
1688.</sup> Parliament was presently organized on party lines, and party considerations began to influence the policy of the Government of the day towards the Company.

The authority of the Company in India was at this time only just short of sovereign. The famous resolution adopted by the Directors at the instance of Sir Josia Child in 1688 'announced in unmistakable terms the determination of the Company to guard their commercial supremacy on the basis of their territorial sovereignty and foreshadowed the annexations of the next century'.² 'The increase of our revenue', it runs, 'is the subject of our care as much as our trade; 'tis that must maintain our force when twenty accidents may interrupt our trade; 'tis that must make us a nation in India. . . .' For the word 'nation' a precisian would perhaps substitute 'State', but the mean-

¹ *Impeachment of Warren Hastings*. Speech I.

² Ilbert, *Government of India*, p. 24.

ing is clear. The Company, forsaking the original policy prescribed by Sir Thomas Roe, was resolved to take advantage of the political conditions prevailing in India¹ and, in the words of the Directors, 'lay the foundations of a large well-grounded sure English dominion in India for all time to come'.

The New
or 'Eng-
lish' Com-
pany,
1698.

Meanwhile, the trading monopoly of the Company was seriously menaced. Under the last two Stuart kings its success had been phenomenal. The dividends averaged 25 per cent. during the years 1657-91, and during the decade 1672-82 were so much higher that in 1683 the market price of the £100 share was £500.² That private traders, or 'interlopers', should have made no effort to get a share in this profitable trade was contrary to human nature. The Whigs were inclined to encourage such efforts at the expense of a Company whose sympathies were predominantly Tory; in 1691 the 'interlopers' formed themselves into a rival Company; the House of Commons was moved to declare that 'all the subjects of England have equal right to trade to the East Indies, unless prohibited by Act of Parliament', and in 1698, Parliament in consideration of a loan of two millions from the Company to the State, recognized the New Company, under the title of the 'General Society', and, subject to the reservation of the rights of the old (or London) Company, until 29 September 1701, gave it the exclusive right of trading with the East Indies.

A period of some confusion ensued; but the Old Company, partly by subscribing £315,000 to the *General Society*, and partly by procuring an Act of Parliament (1700) permitting its continuance as a corporation, found itself strong enough to extort good terms from its rival, and in 1708 the confusion was determined by the union of the Companies.³

¹ See *supra*, pp. 27 seq.

² Scott, *Joint Stock Companies*, i. 363 seq.

³ Should a paragraph necessarily condensed lack lucidity, the details of these complicated transactions may be read in Roberts, *Hist. Geog. of India*, pp. 52-9.

Parliament showed itself as indulgent to the United Company as the Crown had been to the original Company, and during the first half of the eighteenth century its privileges were periodically extended, and its powers defined and enlarged.

It were tedious to follow these concessions in detail; nor is it necessary, for they pale into insignificance as compared with the important reforms of Clive in India.

In 1760, as already mentioned, Clive had, for a second time returned home, having in less than a decade accomplished a memorable work. He had conducted to a successful issue the contest for supremacy between the Company and the last of its European rivals in the East: by his victory at Plassey he had successfully initiated the contest between the Company and the 'Native Powers', and had placed a puppet of his own on the Viceregal throne at Murshidabad. Clive was rewarded in 1762 with a Barony in the Peerage of Ireland, but this did not exclude him from the House of Commons, where he sat as Member for Shrewsbury from 1760 until his death in 1774.

Under a stern sense of duty he was, however, persuaded in 1765 to return to India as President and Governor of Bengal and Commander of the Forces. Badly was his strong hand needed. The Government of Bengal had, in his absence, become completely disorganized. Malversation and corruption were invading every branch of the administration. The servants of the Company, miserably paid by the Directors, were making vast fortunes by means which would not bear investigation. 'No civilized government ever existed on the face of this earth which was more corrupt, more perfidious and more capricious than the East India Company was from 1758 to 1784 when it was placed under Parliamentary Control.' So said Sir G. Cornewall Lewis speaking on the India Bill of 1858. Lewis was an eminent disciple of the Manchester School, a 'little Englander' if ever there was one, and wholly out of sympathy with the sentiment of Empire. Nor, though a detached philosopher in the study, was he superior to the

Clive's
reforms.

temptations incidental to parliamentary debate. But his indictment does not lack support.

'It may be doubted whether the Danes in England, the Spaniards in Mexico, or the Mahrattas in Aliverdi's time, were more oppressive to a harassed multitude of native inhabitants than were the English who were making their fortunes in Bengal while Clive was in England recruiting his "health" from 1760-65.'

So wrote Miss Harriet Martineau in 1857. Miss Martineau was tarred with the same brush which disfigured Lewis. But, in truth, we need not go beyond Clive's own testimony. 'I found your affairs', he wrote to the Directors, 'in a condition so nearly desperate as would have alarmed any set of men whose sense of honour had not been estranged by the too eager pursuit of their own immediate advantage. . . . Their deeds made the name of the English stink in the nostrils of a Hindu or a Mussulman.' 'I am determined', he wrote, 'to destroy those great and growing evils or to perish in the attempt.' He kept his word. He cleansed the Augean stable of corruption. He augmented the official salaries of the Company's servants, but rigidly prohibited private trading and the acceptance of presents from natives. His reforming zeal was, of course, bitterly resented. His own Council openly opposed him, and two hundred English officers headed a mutiny in the Company's forces; but Clive's indomitable will bore down all opposition. The mutiny was crushed; the ringleaders were punished with relentless severity, the dupes were contemptuously reinstated, and the Governor's authority was completely reasserted.

Salutary, and indeed essential as was this disciplinary work, it was not comparable in permanent significance to the momentous change which, in 1765, Clive effected in the relations between the Company on the one side, and the ruling powers at Delhi and Murshidabad on the other.

The Emperor at Delhi had, indeed, ceased to rule: the real sovereignty over Bengal, Behar, and Orissa had passed to the Nawab who reigned at Murshidabad. Down

to the year 1765 the technical position of the Company was that of tenants, holding under the Great Mogul. But by a Firman issued on 12 August 1765 the Emperor Shah Alam granted to the Company the *Diwanni* or financial administration of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa. The Company agreed to pay the Emperor a yearly revenue of 26 lacs of rupees (£260,000), and to the Nawab at Murshidabad 53 lacs. So reluctant, however, was the Company to assume the formal responsibility of government that criminal jurisdiction remained vested in the Nawab. A treaty concluded, a few days later, with the Nawab of Oudh and the Emperor brought that great State into dependence on the Company, by whom it was maintained until the time of Lord Dalhousie as a great buffer state, in the first instance to fend off the attacks of the Marathas, and later that of the Sikhs.

The Dual System initiated by Clive, though a very im-
 portant landmark in the constitutional evolution of British India, proved neither financially nor politically successful. Clive himself did not await the results of his experiment. He finally returned home in 1767, and resumed his place in the House of Commons. He was rancorously attacked by his enemies alike in Parliament and at the India House; but before his premature death by his own hand, in 1774, the House of Commons unanimously expressed its sense of 'his great and meritorious services to his country'. Acceptable to a wounded spirit as that Resolution was, its terms were conventional. Burke's tribute, on the contrary, was as fine in imagery as it was accurate in substance: Clive 'settled great foundations'; he 'forded a deep river with an unknown bottom'. The Dual System.

In the meantime Parliament had passed legislation of high constitutional significance. A parliamentary inquiry into the affairs of the Company, instituted in 1766, led to a series of Acts, under which the dividend payable by the Company was restricted in the first instance to 10 and then to 12½ per cent., and a contribution of £400,000 a year was to be made to the Exchequer.

The Company paid for a few years the restricted dividends, but though its servants were amassing immense fortunes the Company itself was moving fast towards the abyss of insolvency. A terrible famine in Bengal (in 1770) completed its discomfiture, and in 1772 it was compelled to apply to Parliament for a loan to avert imminent bankruptcy.

Parliament responded with the legislation of 1773. By one Act Parliament promised the Company a loan of £1,400,000 at 4 per cent.; suspended the payment of the annual tribute of £400,000 until the loan was repaid, further restricted the rate of interest; insisted on the presentation of half-yearly accounts to the Treasury, and required the Company to export annually to its Eastern Settlements British goods of a specified value.

The
Regulat-
ing Act.

Of much higher significance than these financial terms were those embodied in *The Regulating Act*. That Act was the first of a series of measures by which the sovereignty of India was gradually transferred from a trading company to the King-in-Parliament. It vested the Governorship of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa in a Governor-General and a Council of four members who were to exercise control over the provincial Presidencies of Madras and Bombay; they were, in the first instance, nominated in the Act and to be irremovable for five years, except by the King on the representation of the Court of Directors; but at the end of five years the appointments were to revert to the Company. The first Governor-General was to be Warren Hastings, who had been Governor of Bengal since 1772, and the first Members of Council were to be Mr. Barwell, an old servant of the Company in India, and three men sent out direct from England, General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and the notorious Philip Francis, the reputed author of the *Letters of Junius*. No appointments, as things turned out, could well have been more unfortunate; the system itself was ill devised; in hands such as these it was to prove entirely unworkable. The Governor-General and Council were to obey the orders of the Court of Directors and keep

them regularly informed of all matters of interest to the Company. The Directors on their part were, within fourteen days, to send copies of all those portions of the Governor's dispatches concerning revenue to the Treasury, and concerning civil or military administration to the Secretary of State. A supreme Court of Justice, the Judges of which were appointed by the Crown, was established in Calcutta. A liberal salary was assigned to the Governor-General—£25,000 a year; £10,000 to each member of Council; £8,000 to the Chief Justice, and £6,000 to each puisne Judge. The acceptance of any present or reward from any Prince or other native in India was strictly prohibited; nor was any employee of the Company to be concerned directly or indirectly with trade except on behalf of the Company.

Warren Hastings, when appointed under this Act to the office of Governor-General, had been already for more than twenty years one of the Company's servants in India. After Clive's victory at Plassey, Hastings had been appointed to the difficult post of agent at the Court of the Nawab at Murshidabad. He there acquired an intimate knowledge of the scandalous corruption which was, as we have seen, at that time characteristic of the Company's administration. Nor had he any doubt as to the root cause of the evil he deplored. 'Nothing', he wrote, 'will ever reach the root of these evils till some certain boundary be fixed between the Nawab's authority and our own privileges.' Clive's attempt to fix that boundary was only partially successful, and it fell to Hastings, as we shall see, to abolish Clive's Dual System, and to establish the Company as the actual and responsible governing authority in Bengal.

'On my arrival in Bengal, I found this Government', he wrote, 'in possession of a great and rich dominion and a wide political system, which has since been greatly extended without one rule of government but what descended to it from its ancient commercial institutions, or any principle of policy but such as accident or the desultory judgement of those in actual power recommended. It was necessary to restore the authority

of government to the source from which its powers originated; to assume the direct control instead of allowing it to act by a concealed and weakened influence; to constitute an uniform and effectual mode for the management and collection of the public revenue; to establish regular courts for the administration of civil and criminal justice; to give strength and utility to its political connexions and to transfer a share of its wealth to Great Britain without exhausting its circulation.'

The first two years of Hastings's government were devoted to the attainment of the objects thus succinctly summarized. He put an end to the Dual System; he dismissed the Nawab's native Minister, who was responsible to the English Government for the collection of revenue, the administration of justice, and the maintenance of order; transferred the functions of this great functionary to servants of the Company, upon whom Hastings consistently imposed direct responsibility; and removed the actual seat of government from Murshidabad to Calcutta. Thus did the Company become in form as well as in fact the sovereign ruler of Bengal.

Warren Hastings was, unfortunately, during his whole term of office, perpetually harassed by demands from the Directors for larger dividends on India Stock. The result was a series of measures, for which, from his own day to our own, he has been bitterly criticized. This side of his work must receive attention later on. But it is pertinent in the present connexion to observe that all his work was accomplished under the most difficult conditions. He was, throughout, serving two masters: the British Parliament and the Board of Directors. The ridiculous system under which the Governor-General could be outvoted in his own Council would have hampered his policy in India even had that Council not included a man like Philip Francis. As it was, Francis, from the first, opposed Hastings at every possible step, encouraged his enemies to intrigue against him, and reduced to a minimum the Governor-General's authority in his own Council.

While thus hampered by the conditions of the *Regulating*

Act, Hastings was called upon to confront a crisis in India, rendered more dangerous by the fact that not in India only but in Europe and in America, Great Britain was at the moment engaged in a fight for her very existence. Two great masters of rhetoric have used their superb talents to besmirch the character, if not to belittle the achievements, of this great Englishman. With those achievements in the larger sphere of his foreign policy, a later chapter will deal; but it is here relevant to recall the fact that all his work was done under, or in spite of, a system which was terminated only by the passing of Pitt's Statute of 1784. .

The system established in 1773 could not under any circumstances have been more than transitional. The daring defiance with which Hastings met the attempts of the Home Government and the Directors to control his action in India, and the charges of cruelty and extortion alleged against him by his enemies, both in India and in England, combined to bring the system to an end. Though the services of Hastings were of incomparable value to this country, no Government could permit its orders to be set systematically at defiance. In 1781, therefore, a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire into the administration of justice in Bengal, and on the Report of that Committee amendments to the Statute of 1773 were enacted. In no respect was the *Regulating Act* more defective than in its failure to define the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court which it set up, and the relation between that Court and the Governor-General in Council—between the Judicial and Executive Departments of Government. A high authority has formulated certain questions, to which the *Regulating Act* supplied no answer: (1) What law was the Supreme Court to administer? (2) To whom was this law to be administered? (3) On whom lay the burden of proving exemption from or subjection to the jurisdiction of the Court? Was it confined to the English and native officers of the Company or did it extend to the native inhabitants of India residing in the three provinces?¹

¹ Ilbert, *Government of India*, p. 54 seq.

The *Amending Act* of 1781 virtually settled all the points in dispute between the Supreme Court and the Governor-General-in-Council in favour of the latter.

After the passing of this Act, the Committee, of which Burke was the most prominent member, continued to sit for several years. It accumulated a vast amount of evidence and presented to the House no fewer than twelve informative but voluminous Reports, inspired and indeed mainly drafted by Burke. These Reports made the stay-at-home Englishman for the first time aware of what his countrymen were doing in India, and of the curiously anomalous system under which the work was done. Nowhere, indeed, is the state of India on the eve of the great constitutional change effected by Pitt's Act better described than in a passage from the Ninth Report:

'Your Committee', it runs, 'find that during the whole period which elapsed from 1773 to the commencement of 1782, disorders and abuses of every kind multiplied. Wars, contrary to policy and contrary to public faith, were carrying on in various parts of India. The allies and dependent subjects of the Company were everywhere oppressed. Dissensions in the Supreme Council prevailed for the greater part of that time; the contests between the civil and judicial powers threatened that issue, to which they came at last—an armed resistance to the authority of the King's Court of Justice; the orders which, by an Act of Parliament, the servants were bound to obey, were avowedly and on principle contemned; until at length the fatal effects of accumulated misdemeanours abroad and neglects at home broke out in the alarming manner which your Committee have so fully reported to this House.'

This summary, though obviously coloured by Burke's detestation of Hastings, undoubtedly revealed a confused situation which called peremptorily for reform.

Fox's
India
Bill. The administration of justice was not, however, the only subject into which Parliament inquired in 1781. A Secret Committee, presided over by Dundas, investigated the causes of the war in the Carnatic. Acting on the reports just mentioned, Charles James Fox introduced in 1783 his

India Bill. That Bill proposed to transfer the Government of India from the Company to a Board of seven Commissioners to be appointed, in the first instance, by Parliament, and afterwards by the Crown. These Commissioners were to have an absolute power of placing or displacing all persons in the service of the Company and of ordering and administering the territories, revenues, and commerce of India. The details of commercial administration were to be entrusted to the management of a second subordinate body of nine assistant-Directors, to be chosen in the first instance by Parliament and afterwards by the Court of Proprietors.

The Bill though boldly conceived was open to very grave objections. It not only violated the chartered rights of the Company and struck a serious blow at the principle of private property, but proposed to vest in the Commissioners, appointed in the first instance by Parliament and subsequently by the Crown, the whole patronage of India, estimated to be worth two millions a year, by this means giving Fox and his friends an instrument of political corruption more potent than that of all the borough-mongers combined. Yet it cannot be doubted that Fox himself, and still more Burke, honestly believed it to be their sacred mission 'to rescue the greatest number of the human race that ever were so grievously oppressed from the gravest tyranny that ever was exercised'. The Bill, though carried in the House of Commons by large majorities, was defeated in the House of Lords, partly through the opposition of the Company, partly because the Bill was represented as a corrupt attempt on the part of the Whigs to control the patronage of India for Party purposes, and not least through the direct intervention of the King, who authorized Lord Temple to announce, in debate, that whoever voted for the Bill would be regarded as his personal enemy. Thus, as Fox bitterly complained, 'a Bill framed for the happiness of thirty millions of our fellow creatures was strangled in the very moment of triumph by an infamous string of bedchamber janissaries.' Lord Thurlow was unquestionably guilty of grotesque exaggeration when

he declared that if the Bill passed, 'the King would in effect take the diadem from his own head and place it on that of Mr. Fox'; yet the fact remains that the defeat of the Bill was regarded as a personal triumph for the King, who contemptuously dismissed Fox and North and appointed as Prime Minister the young Pitt.

Pitt's India Act. Pitt could not, however, decline the task unsuccessfully attempted by Fox. Owing to the fact that he took office while in a minority in the House of Commons his first India Bill was rejected. But no sooner had he obtained a parliamentary majority than he introduced and passed into law the India Bill of 1784. That Act transferred the government of British India to a Board of six Commissioners, subsequently known as the Board of Control. The Board was to consist of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, one of the Secretaries of State, and four other Privy Councillors, to be appointed by the King, and to hold office during his pleasure. The Members of the Board were to be unpaid and were not to exercise patronage, but the President of the Board became virtually, though not formally, a Secretary of State for India. The Board was authorized 'to superintend, direct, and control all acts, operations, and concerns which in any wise relate to the civil or military government or revenues of the British territorial possessions in the East Indies'. It was to have access to all papers and muniments of the Company, and to receive copies of dispatches, sent or received. Thus, in political affairs the Company was reduced to entire dependence on the Board of Control. On the other hand all patronage remained at the disposal of the Directors, who were still to carry on the commercial operations of the Company. The Court of Directors was, however, to appoint a Committee of Secrecy of not more than three Directors, and when the Board of Control issued orders requiring secrecy, these were to be transmitted to India only with the knowledge of the Secret Committee. The Governor-General's Council was reduced to three Members, one of whom was to be the Commander-in-Chief, and the

control of the Governor-General over the Presidencies of Bombay and Madras was substantially increased. A supplementary Act, passed in 1786, in deference to the remonstrances of Lord Cornwallis, empowered the Governor-General to disregard the majority of his Council, provided he did so in a formal way and accepted full personal responsibility.

Such were the main provisions of the famous Statute which for the first time defined, with precision, the relations between the British Government and the embryonic Empire in India. The scheme was admittedly a compromise. Unlike Fox's Bill it confiscated no property; it disestablished no institution. But though in no sense revolutionary it marked an important stage in the evolutionary process by which the administration of a great Dependency was transferred from the control of a commercial Company to that of the Imperial Crown. The compromise left to the Directors, as Marshman has picturesquely said, 'all the trappings of greatness, their grand house, their magnificent banquets, their vast patronage; they were still the grandest Corporation in the greatest city of the world, but there was still the check-string behind the machinery which controlled all its movements.'

The check-string was supplied by the Board of Control, which, for the first sixteen years of its existence, was presided over by Henry Dundas, afterwards Viscount Melville. It has been said (and by a Scotchman) that 'Scotland, his party, and himself were the three passions of Dundas's life'.¹ Yet he was Pitt's right-hand man, and Pitt would not have given so much of his confidence, I am fain to believe, to one who was nothing more (to use Sir John Fortescue's description) than a 'born wire-puller' or, in Lord Rosebery's more polite and polished phrase, 'a great political strategist'. 'In India,' writes the former, 'he left no mark beyond the high-water mark of the flood of his countrymen whom he poured into that country with in-

¹ Sir C. G. Robertson.

defatigable jobbery. His fellow Scots of course assume that this was the happiest fate which could befall the great Peninsula.' In view of the great Scottish names with which the missal of Indian History is illuminated, even a Southron may be impelled to the belief that it was. But the point, curiously ignored by Sir John Fortescue, is that the working of the Act in India, during the whole of Dundas's tenure at the Board of Control, was committed to two great pro-consuls, Lord Cornwallis and Lord Wellesley; and that at Wellesley's side were two hardly less distinguished brothers, Henry and Arthur, afterwards Duke of Wellington. To the India of Cornwallis and the Wellesleys we must, in a later chapter, return.

The machinery set up by the Act of 1784 was undeniably cumbrous, yet in practice the dual system functioned effectively, and lasted until the Mutiny. The Mutiny, however, brought both the Act and the Company to an end, and India passed under the direct government of the Crown.

VI

THE ENGLISH COMPANY AND THE INDIAN STATES

Warren Hastings

THE English Company having by 1763 disposed of all its European rivals found itself face to face with a number of Rajahs and Nawabs, Chiefs and Princes who are commonly described as 'Native'. They were all Asiatic in origin, but save for that fact were only in various degrees more 'native' than the English.

Condition
of India
circa. 1750.

To these Princes, as to the English and French Companies, the dissolution of the Mogul Empire had given an opportunity, which the more ambitious among them were anxious to redeem.

After the death of Aurungzeb the great Empire founded by Baber had fallen, as we have seen, into hopeless decay. Not, however, until the Mutiny, was the last of the Mogul Dynasty, Bahadur Shah, formally deposed; not until India passed under the British Crown was the Empire over which the Mogul had long since ceased to exercise any authority, technically dissolved. Nevertheless, for more than a century, the Empire had been a phantom, and the successive occupants of Akbar's throne had been mere puppets in the hands of his own Viceroys, of the Afghans, the Marathas, or the English.

The
Mogul
Empire.

In the middle of the eighteenth century the vast sub-continent which we know as 'India' was in truth masterless. No central authority existed; and although innumerable States and Powers had come into being in the south, the centre, and the north, it was impossible for a contemporary to foresee what might happen. Such situations periodically recur in human history. To the situation in India Lord Macaulay found a parallel in the condition of Europe after the death of Charlemagne. It may be that a similar crisis has to-day arisen in the history of China.

We concern ourselves solely with India. Out of the welter and confusion in which India was involved there gradually emerged four powers, whose rivalry supplies the main thread of Indian history for the half-century which followed Clive's victory at Plassey.¹

Those Powers were the Viceroy of the Deccan generally known as the Nizam, the ruler of Mysore, the Maratha Confederacy, and the English Company. In order to follow the tangled thread it is necessary to understand how these Powers severally stood.

The English Company. The position of the English Company was wholly anomalous and almost defies legal analysis. Acting under a succession of charters the Company had established trading centres in Madras, Bombay, and Bengal. In Bombay it had acquired proprietary if not sovereign rights, subject, of course, to the paramount sovereignty of the British Crown. 'The right to fortify and defend the place, to maintain troops there, to administer justice, to levy taxes, to coin money, was', says Professor Dodwell, 'clear, full and indisputable.'² In Madras the position was more equivocal, but substantially the Company exercised sovereign authority subject to the payment of a quit rent, paid sometimes to a local potentate, at other times to Delhi. Most equivocal of all was the position in Bengal, and as that Presidency was destined to ultimate supremacy over the others, it is on Bengal that we may, for simplicity's sake, concentrate our attention.

In Bengal the status of the Company was, down to 1756, merely that of zemindar under the Nawab of Bengal, who was himself nominally subordinate to the Emperor at Delhi. But after Clive's reconquest of Calcutta and his victory at Plassey the position of the Company was in fact, if not in theory, completely changed. If the Emperor was the puppet of his Nawab, the Nawab became in fact the puppet of the Company. The taking over of the financial

¹ The period lasted in fact 61 years (1757-1818), until the close of the last Maratha war.

² *Cambridge History of India*, v. 589.

administration (*Diwanni*) in 1765 marked, as we have seen, a further stage on the road which led to political sovereignty. Under Warren Hastings (1772-84) the journey was completed: the Company became *de facto*, if not *de jure*, sovereign in Bengal.

The road, however, was a rough one, and the position of the Company was not finally assured until the victory which ended the third and last of the Maratha wars in 1818.

Of the native competitors for supremacy in India by far the most formidable was the Maratha Confederacy. The Marathas, a Hindu race of low-caste origin, first appear on the stage of Indian history in the middle of the seventeenth century. Their original home was in the hill-country of the western Ghats to the east of Bombay, whence, under the leadership of Sivaji (1627-80), a brilliant military adventurer, they made marauding expeditions into the territories of their neighbours, breathing fire and slaughter, and returning only on payment of heavy contributions. Sivaji was, however, much more than a successful bandit. A great guerrilla warrior, imposing strict discipline on his followers, he was also a statesman of high administrative capacity. He it was who welded the Marathas into a nation, and launched them on a political career which might, but for the presence of European rivals, have led to the establishment of a Hindu supremacy throughout the sub-continent.

Not, however, under Sivaji's dynasty. His descendants, indeed, continued, though not without interruption, to occupy the throne he had set up at Satara, until, by the application of the doctrine of 'lapse', that State passed in 1848 under British sway. But, as generally happened in Indian politics, effective power had long since passed from the ruler to a subject. Early in the eighteenth century a certain Balaji Vishvanath succeeded in making the office of Peshwa, or Mayor of the Palace, hereditary, and established his dynasty at Poona, which henceforward became the capital of the Maratha Confederacy.

Other Maratha States were established in virtual in-

dependence, in Gwalior, Indore, Berar, and Baroda, and by the middle of the eighteenth century the Marathas were making a bold bid for supremacy over the whole sub-continent. They conquered Gujarat, Malwa, and Orissa (1736-51); in 1758 they occupied the Punjab, and in 1760 took possession of Delhi itself.

Battle of
Panipat.

Their rapid progress alarmed the first Afghan Conqueror, Ahmad Shah Durani, and in 1759 he returned to India, re-occupied the Punjab, and in 1761 inflicted on the Marathas a crushing defeat at Panipat in the Punjab. But this resounding victory brought little permanent advantage to the victor, nor did it permanently impair the power of the vanquished. The Peshwa himself never recovered his prestige; his authority over the Confederacy was broken, but the component kingdoms, after a while, recovered, and during the next half-century gave constant trouble to the English Company. Ahmad Shah was compelled by a mutiny of his troops to withdraw to Afghanistan.

The steady advance of the Maratha power had not, down to this point, seriously interfered, save in Bombay, with the activities of the English Company. On the contrary, their advance had weakened the Mohammedan Viceroyalties and, in particular, as Sir Alfred Lyall points out, had countered the growing influence of Bussy, the French Resident, at Hyderabad. The same writer quotes, with evident concurrence, an opinion expressed, in October 1756, by the President and Council of Madras: 'We look on the Morathoes to be more than a match for the whole (Mogul) Empire, were no European force to interfere.' In other words it seems highly probable that, but for the appearance of the Europeans on the field of Indian politics, the Marathas would have established their supremacy over the whole of Central and Southern India, if they had not, indeed, grasped the sceptre which was falling from the listless hands of the phantom Emperor at Delhi. As things were, the English Governors were able to maintain a balance of power among the leading States in India until the day came when Lord Wellesley could make a bold advance and

establish the Company, in its own despite, as the Paramount Power in India. Meanwhile, the Balance of Power policy depended for its success on the rapid rise to prominence of the States of Mysore and Hyderabad.

In the Deccan, the Nizam-ul-Mulk (1720-48), the greatest of the Satraps of the Mogul Emperor, had established an hereditary dynasty, and from his capital at Hyderabad ruled over that vast district in virtual independence. A deputy of the Nizam, known as the Nawab of Arcot, had similarly established an hereditary sovereignty over the Carnatic. Farther south was the Maratha Kingdom of Tanjore, while another Hindu Rajah ruled at Trichinopoly. Of the chief competitors for supremacy the Nizam, despite his vast dominions, proved the least formidable, and was indeed not seldom the ally, though not always in earlier days a too trustworthy ally, of the English Company.¹

The third of the great 'native' States was that of Mysore. Its rapid rise to prominence was due to the outstanding genius of one of the Mohammedan adventurers, Hyder Ali. Born in 1722, the son of a soldier of lowly birth, Hyder Ali was precisely the type of man to whom the prevailing anarchy offered a superb opportunity. A brilliant soldier and an astute politician he was equally conspicuous for courage in the field and for craft in Council. A savage in cruelty, utterly unscrupulous, he was nevertheless an accomplished linguist, an expert financier, and a man of great business capacity. Like many other military adventurers of that period he attracted to his banner a number of the mercenary soldiers with whom India in those days teemed. Under a daring leader these men could be sure, if not of regular pay, at least of a share of the rich booty which was the recurrent reward of successful raids. In 1761 Hyder Ali descended upon Mysore, practically pushed aside the ancient Hindu dynasty, established a powerful State under his own rule and bequeathed it, as will be seen, to his son Tipu. Once a year, however, the Hindu Rajah,

¹ Needless to say that H.E.H. the Nizam has long been a most loyal feudatory of the Empire.

a close prisoner in Hyder Ali's hands, was publicly exhibited to his nominal subjects.

First Mysore War, 1767-9. The first of a series of wars between Mysore and the English Company broke out in 1767.¹ A year earlier, the Madras Government, as hopelessly inefficient as it was corrupt, had concluded with the Nizam a bargain by which, as the price of their assistance against Hyder Ali of Mysore, the Company were to obtain the Northern Circars, a long and narrow strip of territory, lying along the coast between Madras and Bengal. The Nizam proved himself a faithless ally, and joined forces indifferently with Hyder Ali and the English as the circumstances of the moment seemed to dictate. In 1767, having united his forces with those of Hyder Ali, the two adventurers were severely defeated at Trincomalee by Colonel Joseph Smith, but the ground thus lost was more than regained by Hyder Ali when in 1769 he rode at the head of his cavalry up to the walls of Madras, and dictated a peace, on the basis of *uti possidetis*. Evidently it was high time, if the whole position of the Company in India was not to be hopelessly compromised, to bring the incompetent government of Madras under the control of Calcutta. That, as we have seen, was done by the Act of 1773.

And not only the Government of Madras. As the first Mysore War was due to the folly and incompetence of Madras, so our first serious conflict with the Marathas (1775) was provoked by the ambition of the Bombay Presidency. By that time, however, the supreme government had passed into the hands of Warren Hastings, and the results were, therefore, less unfortunate.

Before he was involved in war with the Marathas Hastings had luckily had time, by a series of bold measures, to consolidate his own position and that of the Company in Bengal. He had removed the seat of government from Murshidabad, whence the Nawab had ruled, to Calcutta; he had substantially reduced the allowance paid by the

¹ The subsequent wars were: (i) 1780-4—sometimes reckoned as 'the First Mysore War'; (ii) 1790-2; (iii) March-May 1799.

Company to the Nawab of Bengal, and had abolished altogether the tribute paid to the Mogul Emperor. The Emperor Shah Alam (1759-1806) was at this time virtually a prisoner in the hands of the Marathas, by whom he was restored to Delhi in 1771. The tribute to him, therefore, was in fact a subsidy to his jailers. A similar motive inspired the action of Hastings in regard to Allahabad and Corah. Those districts had been handed over by Clive to the Emperor, when in 1765 he granted the Diwanni of Bengal to the Company. But covering, as they did, our north-western frontier they could not be permitted to fall into the hands of the great military Confederacy which held in pawn the person of the Mogul.

The policy of Hastings was to ~~interpose a barrier, as strong as he could make it, against the advance of the Marathas towards Bengal.~~ ^{Oudh and the Rohillas.} Oudh was a convenient buffer, and to Oudh, accordingly, he handed over Allahabad and Corah by the Treaty of Benares (September 1773). Shuja-ud-daula, the Nawab-Vizier of Oudh, paid 50 lacs of rupees for the concession, and agreed also to pay a subsidy towards the maintenance of a British garrison.

The Rohilla War was part and parcel of the same policy. No incident in Hastings's career brought down upon his head more violent obloquy at the time; nor was he entirely cleared of the charges against him, in this connexion, until the publication, some forty years ago, of Sir John Strachey's brilliant monograph.¹ That the charges should have been so long believed was due primarily no doubt to the inflamed rhetoric of Burke and still more to the glittering phrases with which Macaulay embellished, exaggerated, and, to speak bluntly, falsified the story.

The Rohillas were one of many warlike tribes of Afghanistan, and had, some twenty-five years ago, conquered the Hindu province of Rohilkhand. Their territory being threatened, like that of Oudh, by the Marathas, the two neighbours concluded a defensive alliance against those terrifying bandits. Such alliances were, however, of

¹ *Hastings and the Rohilla War* (Oxford, 1892).

the most elastic character, and the only uncertainty was which of the two allies would first desert the other and combine with the common enemy. The Nawab-Vizier of Oudh represented to Hastings that a combination between the Rohillas and Marathas was imminent, and if concluded would gravely menace the security both of Oudh and Bengal.

Hastings assented, and at the price of 40 lacs of rupees agreed to supply a brigade to join the troops of the Nawab in anticipating the attack of the Rohillas. The brunt of the fighting fell on the British contingent; the Rohillas were heavily defeated, and their territory was handed over to the Nawab. The Nawab's troops having displayed the utmost cowardice in the field were subsequently guilty of cruelties which brought disgrace upon their British associates. Hastings ought no doubt to have foreseen such a contingency, and have taken precautions against it. Thus far, but no farther, he deserved the censure passed upon him. Politically, however, his policy brilliantly fulfilled his anticipations. He strengthened the buffer State of Oudh, and by breaking the power of the Rohillas, made reasonably secure the north-western frontiers of Bengal. As regards the Rohillas, Sir John Strachey's exposure of the myth, laboriously built up by Burke, Mill, and Macaulay, is so conclusive that it may be permissible to quote a few sentences from his monograph.

'I have personally', he writes, 'had occasion to investigate the facts of perhaps the worst of the crimes of which Hastings has been accused, the sale and extermination of the Rohillas. . . . I went to Rohilkhand without a doubt of the truth of the terrible story told by Burke and Mill and by Lord Macaulay in his famous essay, but I soon changed my opinion. I found myself in the midst of a population by which the history of those times had not been forgotten, and of which an important and numerous section consisted of Rohillas, the children and grandchildren of the men whose race was supposed to have been almost exterminated. I was in frequent communication with a Rohilla prince who ruled over a considerable territory which his ancestor owed to Warren Hastings, and which had been in

the possession of his family ever since. No one had ever heard of the atrocities which to this day fill Englishmen with shame. Later in life I was able to undertake an examination of the original authorities on the Rohilla War, and I can hardly express in moderate language my indignation at the misrepresentations, the suppression of truth, the garbling of documents of which I found that Mill had been guilty. The English army was not hired out by Hastings for the destruction of the Rohillas; the Rohillas, described by Burke as belonging to "the bravest, the most honorable and generous nation on earth", were no nation at all, but a comparatively small body of cruel and rapacious Afghan adventurers who had imposed their foreign rule on an unwilling Hindu population, and the story of their destruction is fictitious.

Nevertheless, when the last word of the apologist has been said, it remains true that while there is little ground for the exaggerated indictment preferred against Hastings, the whole business leaves an unwholesome taste in the mouth.

The expedition against the Rohillas took place in 1774. Hardly was it brought to a termination before Hastings was involved in those difficulties with his Council which, as already mentioned, were the direct result of the Regulating Act of 1773. Hastings, Francis, and Nuncomar.

In the dirty work of blackening the character and undermining the authority of their chief, Philip Francis and his colleagues on the Council found an eager ally in the person of an influential but unscrupulous Brahmin. The Maharajah Nuncomar bore personal grudges of long standing against the Governor-General, and had woven around him the net of incriminating charges with the most malignant ingenuity.

The majority of the Council demanded that Nuncomar should be permitted to appear before the Council and personally substantiate his charges against the Governor-General. Hastings very naturally and properly declined to 'preside at his own trial': declared the meeting dissolved, and with his only friend, Barwell, left the Council Chamber. The majority, however, pursued their way undaunted, and

the situation of the Governor-General seemed wellnigh desperate when the tables were suddenly turned. Nuncomar was arrested on a charge of forgery; tried before the Chief Justice, Sir Elijah Impey, convicted by a British jury and condemned to death. To the amazement of the conspirators and the consternation of the Hindus the sentence upon the Brahmin was actually carried out.

That the arrest and execution of his implacable enemy had come in the very nick of time for Hastings cannot be denied. To many minds, including Lord Macaulay's, the inference was irresistible. 'It was', he writes, 'and still is the opinion of everybody, idiots and biographers alone excepted, that Hastings was the real mover in the business', and he proceeds to censure, in the severest terms, the conduct of Chief Justice Impey who, 'sitting as a judge, put a man unjustly to death in order to serve a political purpose.'

Evidently the charges against Hastings and Impey stand or fall together. Can they be sustained? This at least may be said: it hardly lies in the mouth of a layman to question the judgement pronounced by one of the most eminent jurists and judges of recent times. Sir James Fitzjames Stephen was not only a Judge of the High Court in England, but had been legal member of Council in India. Some forty years ago he subjected the whole case to the most careful scrutiny and declared himself convinced that Hastings had nothing whatever to do with the prosecution of Nuncomar; that there was consequently no sort of conspiracy or understanding between Hastings and Impey (admittedly the friend of Hastings but none the less an eminent lawyer and a man of the highest character); and finally, that Nuncomar's trial and condemnation were perfectly fair.¹ Impey was, indeed, impeached in 1788 on six charges, including his conduct of Nuncomar's trial, but he successfully defended himself against them and the impeachment was dropped. It had served its primary purpose; it had prejudiced the case against Hastings.

¹ *Nuncomar and Impey* (1885).

If the judgement of Sir James Stephen is not regarded as conclusive, we are now in a position to support it by an appeal to Francis himself. The Francis papers were in 1915 deposited in the India Office; they were recently utilized for the production of a monograph which should finally expose, as a base party fabrication, the Whig legend that so long passed for history.¹

One more difficulty Hastings had to surmount before he was quit of his venomous colleagues. At the end of the Rohilla business the Governor-General had, in a rare fit of impatience, placed in the hands of his agent in London, Colonel Maclean, a conditional resignation of his office. More than a year afterwards Maclean, by a regrettable mistake, forwarded it to the Directors, who promptly accepted it and appointed General Clavering to hold office *ad interim* until the arrival of Mr. Wheeler, who was appointed to succeed Hastings.

The news reached Calcutta in June 1777 when the quarrel between Hastings and his Council was at its height. Hastings was dumbfounded, but refused to abdicate; Impey and his colleagues of the High Court, to whom the matter was referred, supported Hastings, and two months afterwards Clavering opportunely died. Monson had predeceased him in September 1776. Hastings was at long last master in his own house, and free to carry out his well-considered plans. A letter written by the Governor-General to his friend, Mr. Alexander Elliott, contains a masterly review of the position at that time (12 January 1777) and clearly indicates the policy which he hoped to pursue.

'You are already well acquainted', he wrote, 'with the general system which I wish to be empowered to establish in India, namely, to extend the influence of the British nation to every part of India not too remote from their possessions, without enlarging the circle of their defence or involving them in hazardous or indefinite engagements, and to accept of the

¹ Sophia Weltzman, *Warren Hastings and Philip Francis* (Manchester, 1930).

allegiance of such of our neighbours as shall sue to be enlisted among the friends and allies of the King of Great Britain."¹

In plain English Hastings meant to make Great Britain paramount in India, by steadily though cautiously extending the direct dominion of the Company, and by bringing the rest of the sub-continent into a network of subsidiary alliances. His successors did but follow the lines thus clearly laid down by Hastings. Meanwhile, he was involved, during the remaining years of his term of office, in a series of wars to which he was committed by the ambition of the subordinate Presidencies, and by the restlessness of the Indian Powers with which they were in immediate contact.

**First Mar-
atha War,
1775-82.** Hitherto the Company had not come into direct conflict with the Maratha Confederacy. But the Bombay Government, anxious to emulate the territorial expansion of the other Presidencies, now entered into negotiations with Ragonaut Rao Ragoba, a pretender to the Peshwarship of Poona, and in 1775 concluded with him the Treaty of Surat. Ragoba was to become Peshwa and in return to cede to the Company the neighbouring island of Salsette, on which the modern city of Bombay partly stands, and the port of Bassein. These places had previously been held by the Portuguese, but had been captured by the Marathas. Ragoba, the most specious of pretenders, proved himself also the most fickle of allies, and the military excursions of the Bombay Government were almost uniformly unfortunate. The Bengal Government stigmatized the whole policy pursued at Bombay as 'impolitic, dangerous, unauthorized, and unjust', but Hastings, unexpectedly supported by the Directors, decided that the Bombay Government must be supported, and dispatched Colonel Goddard to their assistance.² Goddard made a brilliant march across India from sea to sea, captured Ahmadabad, overran the rich province of Gujarat, and occupied

¹ *Ap. Gleig, Warren Hastings*, ii. 136-7.

² The narrative is here (as at other points) somewhat abbreviated. For details of a complicated story see Roberts, *Hist. Geog. of India*, pp. 191-4.

Bassein (1780). Another army under Major Popham was, in the same year, dispatched from Bengal to Malwa, and completed the discomfiture of Sindhia, begun by Goddard, by the capture of the famous fortress—hitherto deemed impregnable—of Gwalior. The fruits of these brilliant victories were largely dissipated by Goddard's failure to take Poona (1781), and in 1782 Hastings was glad enough to conclude the Treaty of Salbai. Gujarat was restored to the Marathas; Ragoba was pensioned by the Peshwa; Salsette with Elephanta and two other small islands represented the sole material recompense for several years of arduous and costly war.

A further consideration must not be ignored. Throughout these years of strain and stress in India, Great Britain was passing through a crisis, perhaps the most dangerous that ever threatened her existence as a World-Power. Her American Colonies had declared their independence in 1776; in 1777 General Burgoyne was compelled to surrender at Saratoga; in 1778 France declared war on England; in 1779 Spain followed suit; Holland joined Spain; in 1780 the northern Powers, headed by Russia, by a declaration of 'armed neutrality', virtually united in a world-coalition against us; in 1782 Ireland extorted a concession of legislative independence.

*Britannia
contra
mundum.*

Our difficulties in Europe, in America, and the West Indies inevitably reacted upon our position in the East. Not only indirectly. France had no longer any political status in India; but there were still Frenchmen at the Courts of the Indian Princes, ceaselessly engaged in intrigues, which might, if not countered, have encouraged their countrymen to attempt the recovery of their lost dominion in the East.

Particularly were the French agents active at the Court of Hyder Ali of Mysore. Large quantities of munitions were dispatched to him from the Isle of Bourbon, and he was encouraged to seize a unique opportunity for driving the British out of Southern India, if not of annihilating their power in the East. Hyder Ali was not the man to

*Second
Mysore
War,
1780-4.*

neglect it. A most formidable combination was effected between himself, the Nizam, the Maharajah of Nagpur, and the rest of the Maratha confederates. The latter were already at war with the British in the north-west. The Maharajah of Nagpur was to attack Bengal; the Nizam to invade the Northern Circars, and Hyder Ali himself was to descend on the Carnatic.

The Madras Government, by an ill-timed attack on the French settlements in Southern India, gave Hyder Ali an opportunity, if not an excuse. The skilful diplomacy of Hastings detached the Nizam and the Maharajah of Nagpur from the contemplated combination, but Hyder Ali, at the head of a great army, fell like a thunderbolt upon the English possessions in the Carnatic (July 1780). The sequel may be told in the words used by Burke in his famous speech on the Nawab of Arcot's debts.

'Then ensued a scene of woe the like of which no eye had seen, no heart conceived and which no tongue can adequately tell. All the horrors of war before known or heard of were mercy to that new havoc. A storm of universal fire blasted every field, consumed every house, destroyed every temple. The miserable inhabitants flying from their flaming villages in part were slaughtered; others without regard to sex, to age, to the respect of rank or sacredness of function, fathers torn from children, husbands from wives, enveloped in a whirlwind of cavalry and amidst the goading spears of drivers and the trampling of pursuing horses, were swept into captivity in an unknown and hostile land. Those who were able to evade this tempest fled to the walled cities. But escaping from fire, sword and exile they fell into the jaws of famine. . . . For eighteen months without intermission this destruction raged from the gates of Madras to the gates of Tanjore; and so completely did these masters in the art, Hyder Ali and his more ferocious son, absolve themselves of their impious vow, that when the British armies traversed, as they did, the Carnatic for hundreds of miles in all directions, through the whole line of their march, they did not see one man, not one woman, not one child, not one four-footed beast of any description whatever. One dead uniform silence reigned over the whole region. With the incon-

siderable exceptions of the narrow vicinage of some few forts, I wish to be understood as speaking literally . . . that hurricane of war passed through every part of the central provinces of the Carnatic. Six or seven districts to the north and to the south (and these not wholly untouched) escaped the general ravage.'¹

Burke was, admittedly, a rhetorician; his statements about India generally took on something of Oriental over-colouring and exaggeration; but the picture he paints of the devastation of the Carnatic seems on the whole to have been little overdrawn. Hastings, on hearing of Hyder Ali's irruption, acted with his usual promptitude; dispatched the veteran commander, Sir Eyre Coote, with a large force to Madras by sea, and sent another large force by land under Colonel Pearse. These prompt measures undoubtedly saved the English Empire in Southern India. But the margin of safety was a narrow one. We may gather this from a letter written to the Directors by Sir John MacPherson—who on Hastings's departure acted as Governor-General *ad interim* (Feb. 1785 to Oct. 1786).

'Of the danger to which the very existence of the Company was then (August 1781) exposed, we can have no adequate idea. Your Army towards Bombay had been obliged to retreat from a gallant but unsuccessful enterprise towards Poona, and it required great bravery and skill to secure their retreat from the Ghats to the seaside. . . . The utmost of their military exertions, though supported by an Army from Bengal, and though they had raised many new battalions, was directed to keep the Marathas in check. In the Carnatic your principal settlement and your main army under Sir Eyre Coote were surrounded by the Army of Hyder. . . . Your treasury at Fort St. George was empty. . . . At Bengal, on which your other Presidencies depended almost entirely for supply, your treasury was drained . . . and to complete the measure of your difficulties a rebellion had broken forth upon your frontiers at Benares, which threatened destruction to all your possessions from the source to the mouths of the Ganges and in every quarter of India.'

¹ Works, iii. 160.

The moment, evidently, was intensely critical. In March a French fleet under Admiral de Suffren had made its way to the Coromandel coast, and had fought several indecisive actions with the British Fleet under Admiral Hughes. Trincomalee, which had been taken by the British from the Dutch in 1778, was recaptured by de Suffren, and a considerable French force was landed at Pondicherry, whence it marched to effect a junction with the army of Hyder Ali. Yet despite this formidable combination Coote won a great victory over the forces of Hyder Ali and the French at Porto Novo in July 1781. Hyder Ali lost ten thousand men, and in the course of the next six months Negapatam and Trincomalee were recovered. Hyder Ali himself died in December 1782, and though the war was carried on with immense vigour by his son and successor, the famous Tipu Sultan, it was brought to an end shortly after the conclusion of the general European peace in 1783. By the Treaty of Mangalore (1784) conquests on both sides were restored, and peace in Southern India was re-established.

'Warren Hastings', as Sir Alfred Lyall truly says, 'had run through very narrow and perilous straits; he had faced many damaging responsibilities, had committed errors and suffered reverses; and had barely rounded without shipwreck one or two very awkward points. Nevertheless he had eventually broken through the ring of obstacles and dangerous rivalries, by which the British Government in India had been encircled, and had so planted our landmarks as to mark out the ground-work of the British dominion.'

The af-
fair of
Benares.

These years of war had, however, strained to the uttermost the resources of the Company, and Hastings had been compelled to have recourse to expedients, not easy to justify, which subsequently supplied the material for two of the articles in his impeachment. The first of the charges was in connexion with the annexation of Benares. That district lying on the frontiers of Bengal was at that time in the hands of a certain Cheyte Singh, who held his lands under the overlordship of the English Company,

and had been confirmed in his tenure through the intervention of Hastings. When the first Maratha War broke out Hastings, following the usual custom of the time and country, demanded from the Rajah a special war contribution as well as a military contingent.¹ Cheyte Singh responded, it was thought, very inadequately; Hastings suspected, not without reason, his loyalty towards the Company; and determined to punish him for his contumacy. Cheyte Singh naturally resisted, was arrested by order of Hastings, and a serious insurrection in the district ensued. Only after considerable fighting was Cheyte Singh ultimately defeated, and compelled to take refuge with the Marathas. He was replaced by a new Rajah, who was assessed to land revenue at a sum double that paid by his predecessor and was deprived of the right to coin money and to exercise civil and criminal jurisdiction. Pitt subsequently expressed the view that Hastings's conduct in this matter had been 'cruel, unjust, and oppressive', but the House of Lords took a more lenient view of it and by a large majority ultimately acquitted him on the Benares charge. Whether his conduct deserved the strictures of Pitt largely depends on the *status* to be imputed to Cheyte Singh. To treat an independent sovereign as Hastings treated him would have been outrageous. If, however, he was merely a zemindar of the Company, the demands of Hastings, though unquestionably heavy, were not under the circumstances either unusual or unreasonable.

A case which excited much greater outcry at home was that of the Begums of Oudh. This formed another of the charges against which Hastings had to defend himself. According to the account given by Macaulay, Hastings, being short of money, demanded a large sum from the Nawab-Vizier of Oudh, and the latter, being unable to find it, conspired with Hastings to rob his mother and grand-

The case
of the
Begums.

¹ The special contribution, in addition to the ordinary tribute of £225,000, was £50,000. For a less lenient view of the conduct of Hastings than that which (with most modern authorities) I have taken, see Roberts, *op. cit.*, pp. 201 sq.

mother, and then proceeded to divide the spoil with the Governor-General. Sheridan put the same point more dramatically when he declared that Hastings 'forced a dagger into the Nawab's clenched hand and pointed it against the bosom of his mother'.

The facts of the whole transaction have now been established on fairly conclusive evidence. The Begums were probably conspiring with other enemies of the British Power in India. They were, moreover, withholding from the Nawab-Vizier very large sums which by right of inheritance belonged to him. The case was put, at Hastings's trial, clearly and fairly by the Bishop of Rochester: 'The Nawab owed the Company a large debt. Hastings represented the Nawab's principal creditor. He compelled the Nawab to reclaim property unjustly withheld and applied for the discharge of his debt.' It was asserted, however, by Burke, and repeated by Macaulay, that Hastings connived at cruelties inflicted on the Begums, and in particular at the torture of their confidential eunuchs who acted as their ministers. The eunuchs in question were roughly handled, but although the charge against Hastings was pressed with rhetorical exaggeration, the Lords acquitted him by a majority of twenty-three to six. Meanwhile Hastings's difficult reign had come to an end. In 1785 he left India for the last time and left it at peace. In England the reception which awaited him was not unworthy of the man whose administrative genius, whose promptitude, and courage, had unquestionably saved the British Empire in the East.

The Im-
peach-
ment.

There had long been a considerable party in the English Parliament who had viewed the proceedings of Hastings in India with increasing suspicion and even detestation. This party found spokesmen in some of the most brilliant orators who ever entered the House of Commons. Foremost among them was Edmund Burke. Burke's whole being, sensitive to every suggestion of wrongdoing by the powerful, and of suffering by the weak, was literally permeated with the poisonous venom wherewith Sir Philip

Francis inoculated him. 'Loaded for years, as he had been, with the execrations of the natives, with the censures of the Court of Directors, and struck and blasted with the Resolutions of this House, [Warren Hastings] still maintains the most despotic power ever known in India.' So Burke had spoken long before there was an opportunity of bringing the chief malefactor to trial. But in the spring of 1786, the charges against Hastings, drawn by Burke, were presented to the House of Commons; the House decided to impeach him, and in February 1788 Burke himself opened the case in one of the greatest orations ever heard in the historic hall of Westminster. For more than seven years the trial dragged its weary length along, until in April 1795 Hastings was at last formally acquitted. But he was a broken man, ruined in fortune, and pierced to the heart by the arrows of outrageous fortune. He had returned from India much poorer than his enemies supposed; the whole of his savings, some £70,000, were spent on the expenses of the trial, and, but for the generosity of the Directors, he must have died in poverty. Nevertheless, the trial, according to the judicial summary of Sir Alfred Lyall, had

'several beneficial results. It cleared off a crowd of misconceptions, calumnies, exaggerations and false notions generally on both sides; it fixed and promulgated the standard which the English people would in future insist upon maintaining in their Indian administration; it bound down the East India Company to better behaviour; it served as an example and as a salutary warning, and it relieved the national conscience. But the attempt to make Hastings a sacrifice and a burnt-offering for the sins of the people; the process of loading him with curses and driving him away into the wilderness; of stoning him with every epithet and metaphor that the English language could supply for heaping ignominy on his head; of keeping him seven years under an impeachment that threatened him with ruin and infamy—these were blots upon the prosecution, and wide aberrations from the true course of justice which disfigured the aspect of the trial, distorted its aim, and had much to do with bringing it to the lame and impotent conclusion that Burke so bitterly denounced.'

It was indeed 'monstrous', as Sir James Stephen emphatically wrote, 'that a man should be tortured at irregular intervals for seven years in order that a singularly incompetent tribunal might be addressed before an excited audience by Burke and Sheridan, in language far removed from the calmness with which an advocate for the prosecution ought to address a criminal court.' Hard things have been said and written of King George IV, nor can it be denied that many of them were richly deserved; but let it be remembered to his credit, that he was the patron of Sir Walter Scott, the fervent admirer of Jane Austen, and that in 1814 he presented Warren Hastings to the Allied Sovereigns as 'the most ill-used man in the dominions of the Crown'.

Does any fair-minded person in these days entertain a doubt that the words of the Prince Regent represented the bare truth? Ill-used Hastings was, but he survived the conclusion of his trial for more than twenty years, living a life of quiet retirement at Daylesford. The evening of a life, the noonday of which had been lived under a scorching sun of excitement and opprobrious publicity, was honoured and peaceful. The King admitted him to the Privy Council; Oxford conferred a D.C.L. degree on the man who, but for a guardian's impatience to be rid of a troublesome charge, might have spent his life as a student of Christ Church; to the proconsul it had impeached the House of Commons paid a unique mark of respect. When in 1813 he appeared to give evidence before a Committee, all the Members rose to receive him. The incident, equally honourable to Hastings and to the House, deeply touched the old man. Five years later he passed away.

The reign of Hastings as Governor-General has been treated with a detail disproportionate to the scale of this book. More than one reason would appear to justify this departure from plan. Hastings was, until recently, the object of malevolent attack, and it is still doubtful whether laborious research and judicial investigation have even

now availed to erase the impression so widely diffused by the oratorical genius of Burke and the literary skill of Macaulay. Moreover, Hastings's tenure of office covered a period, with one exception, the most critical in the whole history of British India, nay in the whole history of the British Empire. Finally, we must in fairness take account of the conditions under which Hastings was condemned to work; the achievement must be measured by the circumstances.

'Menaced by foes on all sides, surrounded by colleagues who thwarted, embarrassed, and intrigued against him. . . [Warren Hastings] contrived by his individual energies to raise the Company from being a body of merchants and adventurers into the most powerful State in the politics of India. Englishmen have grown so accustomed to being the masters of India that they have not sufficiently realized the difficulty of Hastings's task or the genius of the man whose far sight first saw and whose brave and confident patience realized this romantic idea of his country's greatness.'

Such is Sir George Forrest's just and discriminating tribute. Equally irresistible is the claim which, with bitter irony, Hastings made on his own behalf: 'The valour of others acquired, I enlarged and gave consistency to the dominion which you hold there . . . I gave you all, and you have rewarded me with disgrace, confiscation and a life of impeachment.'

'The most ill-used man in the dominions of the Crown.' George IV spoke truth.¹

¹ For a full vindication of Hastings cf. Sir G. W. Forrest's *Selections from Letters, Dispatches, &c., 1772-85*, 3 vols., Calcutta; *Papers of the Governor-General Warren Hastings*, 2 vols., Oxford 1910; see also—more 'pious' but less critical—G. W. Hastings, *Vindication of Warren Hastings*, Oxford, 1909; Sophia Weitzman, *W. Hastings and P. Francis*, Manchester, 1930.



VII

TERRITORIAL EXPANSION (1785-1805)

Cornwallis and Wellesley

OF the proverbial irony of History no country has supplied more illustrations than British India; and never was the course of events more ironical than during the seventy-three years which intervened between the passing of Pitt's India Bill and the outbreak of the Mutiny.

When Warren Hastings left India in 1785 the process of territorial expansion, as a glance at the map will show, had hardly begun. The Company had indeed established a strong strategical position—a position almost impregnable for a Power which held the command of the sea. But the three Presidencies were entirely isolated, each from the other. Communication between them could be maintained only by sea. There were gaps between Bengal and the Northern Circars, and between the latter and Madras. Clive and Warren Hastings had established the Company's position firmly in Bengal, but the Bombay Presidency had, by the Treaty of Salbai, surrendered the territory acquired from the Marathas, and held little more than the two islands of Salsette and Bombay, while Madras, save for the lease of the Northern Circars, had expanded little since the time of the original settlement.

The Company did not covet territory. Parliament by the Act of 1784 positively prohibited its acquisition. That Act declared:

'That the pursuit of schemes of conquest was repugnant to the wish, to the honour and policy of the British nation, and it was therefore enacted that it should not be lawful for the Governor-General, without the express authority and concord of his Court of Directors or of the Secret Committee, either to declare or commence hostilities, or to enter into any treaty for making war against any of the native Princes or States in India. . . .'

So much for the law; but there are forces which no law can control. The enactment of this law and the transference of control from a commercial company to Parliament synchronized, in fact, with the beginnings of territorial expansion on a large scale.

Lord Cornwallis, 1786-93. The first Governor-General under the new régime was a distinguished but not uniformly successful soldier, Charles, second Earl and first Marquess Cornwallis. The post was accepted, 'much against my will and with grief of heart'. But his tenure marked an epoch in the history of the English in India. He was the first man of high rank and established reputation to accept the office; he was the first to hold it, not merely as the representative of a Chartered Company, but of the British Government, and by his reforms left a permanent impress upon British administration in the East. His legal position was strengthened by an Act passed in 1786, giving him power in emergencies to override his Council. What might not Warren Hastings have accomplished had similar powers been confided to him? Cornwallis, though not an outstanding genius like his predecessor,¹ was pre-eminently one of those 'safe' men, in whom Senates confide. He fully justified the confidence.

Reforms of Cornwallis. His first task was to provide a remedy for the terrible corruption which, despite the cleansing of the Augean stables by Clive, still prevailed among the servants of the Company. As long as the nominal salaries paid were miserably inadequate, and as long as the temptations offered by private trade and native bribery were so high, such corruption was inevitable.

'I am sorry to say', so Cornwallis wrote to Dundas (14 August 1787), 'that I have every reason to believe that at present almost all the collectors are, under the name of some relation or friend, deeply engaged in commerce, and by their influence as Collectors and Judges of Adawlet they become the most dangerous enemies to the Company's interest, and the greatest oppressors of the manufacturers. I hope you will approve of

¹ Sir John Macpherson had only held office *ad interim*.

the additional allowances and of the commission that we have given to the collectors, for without them it was absolutely impossible that an honest man could acquire the most moderate competency. After this liberality I made no scruple in issuing the Revenue Regulations and orders against engaging in trade.'

This extract indicates the nature of the remedies applied by Cornwallis. He absolutely prohibited all private trading by the officers of the Company; he assigned to them salaries fixed on a generous, indeed a lavish scale, and he separated the fiscal from the judicial administration. He forbade the collectors of revenue to act as judges, and established an elaborate hierarchy of civil courts: (1) petty debt courts under native Commissioners; (2) in every district a *Zillah* or District Court, under British judges sitting with native assessors learned in Hindu and Mohammedan law; (3) Provincial Courts, four in number, each staffed by three British judges, with native assessors; and (4) a final Court of Appeal in Calcutta consisting of the Governor-General and Council. He also reorganized the whole administration of criminal justice in Bengal.

The complete separation between executive and judicial functions, though in accord with the most advanced opinion of that day, and though still regarded by political theorists as the touchstone of administrative efficiency,¹ did not, in fact, prove practicable in India. Consequently, Lord Hastings (1813-23) found it necessary, some twenty years later, to modify the rigid rules laid down by Lord Cornwallis. Nor has experience failed to justify the confidence thus reposed in the *Collectors*. Lord Hastings's partial reversal of the policy of Cornwallis must not, however, be taken to prove that the policy of the latter was either uncalled for or ineffective. On the contrary it achieved its immediate purpose, and having done so could safely be modified.

But salutary and important as were the administrative and judicial reforms effected by Cornwallis, by far his most

¹ Cf. Montesquieu, *Esprit des lois*; *The Federalist*; and, on the general question, Marriott, *Mechanism of the State*, vol. II, bk. VI.

memorable achievement was his reorganization of the land system of Bengal, by means of what is known as the *Permanent Settlement*.

Then, as now, the land was the main source of the revenue of the State. The Sovereign was the supreme landowner, but the land was leased to the village communities of ryots or peasant cultivators who were accustomed to pay over three-fifths of the produce to the Government by way of rent. This 'rent' was collected by native officials known as *Zemindars*, who received a commission on the amount collected. The office, originally that of a mere collector, tended like most other offices in India to become hereditary; the functions of the *Zemindars* were widely extended; they were charged with almost the whole business of judicature and police, and from being mere 'collectors' came to be almost hereditary landowners. That an Englishman of the eighteenth century should have seen in the *Zemindar* a 'squire' and a county magistrate, was, therefore, a pardonable if regrettable error. Warren Hastings with unfortunate results had put out the collection of the revenue to farm, leasing it for quinquennial periods to the highest bidder. This system broke down; and on instructions from the Directors, Hastings reverted to the system of annual leases. This method proved still more disastrous. Owing to the precarious tenure the land was starved of capital, and Cornwallis found himself faced with a critical situation: the revenue was steadily shrinking, while agriculture—almost the sole source of revenue and the sole 'industry' of the country—was rapidly deteriorating.

Cornwallis, though peremptorily ordered to reform the system, took three years to investigate its intricacies; he made a settlement, in 1789, for a ten years period, but in 1793 abandoned the decennial in favour of a permanent settlement.

The Permanent Settlement. Under the terms of this Settlement the *Zemindar* was practically converted into a landed proprietor, holding vast estates, subject to the payment of a quit rent,

the amount of which was fixed in perpetuity.¹ The Zemindars were not permitted to grant leases of more than a certain term, nor to create perpetual sub-infeudations, or otherwise to 'endanger the realization of the Government revenue'.

As to the merits or demerits of this scheme controversy has raged hotly from that day to this. Was it an act of high statesmanship, or a short-sighted surrender of valuable increments accruing to the State?

That proprietary rights, of great ultimate, if not immediate, value were vested in people to whom they neither legally nor morally belonged cannot be denied. James Mill argues that a unique opportunity was missed. If property was to be transferred from the Sovereign to any class of subjects who had no right to it, why was it not given to the cultivating peasants? 'The motives to improvement which property gives, and of which the power was so justly appreciated, might have been bestowed upon those upon whom they would have operated, with a force incomparably greater than that with which they could operate upon any other class of men', i.e. the actual cultivators of the soil. In that way 'a measure worthy to be ranked among the noblest ever taken for the improvement of any country, might have helped to compensate the people of India for the miseries of that misgovernment which they had so long endured'. Mr. Morse Stephens—a very competent critic—ascribed this 'momentous revolution' to sheer 'ignorance of native Indian laws and customs', and condemned the endowment of a 'factitious aristocracy of Zemindars'. Marshman, on the contrary, describes the Permanent Settlement as a 'bold, brave, and wise measure', and attributes to 'the genial influence of a territorial charter which for the first time created indefeasible rights and interests in the soil', the notable improvement presently discernible in 'the habits and comfort of the people' and in agricultural production.

¹ As regards the peasant cultivators or 'ryots', hopes were held out that their rights, though ill-defined, would some day be recognized, but that hope was only partially fulfilled by the legislation of 1859.

The arguments were in truth nicely balanced. On the one hand, there is no denying the improvements discerned by Marshman: the great advantages to the State no less than to the subject, of indefeasible rights of property in land, and the immense social and economic importance of securing to those who put capital or labour into the soil the benefits accruing from the application of the one or the other. On the other hand, it is certain that the State surrendered valuable rights without adequate consideration, and it is probable that all the advantages claimed for the scheme might have been obtained by a settlement far short of permanent. The decennial period advocated by Sir John Shore might have been too short to yield the fruits which were in fact gathered; but between ten years and 'permanency' there is a wide gap, and Cornwallis would probably have been wise to take a middle course.

Bombay and Madras did not follow the example of Bengal, and have had good reason to congratulate themselves on their decision.

Foreign Policy of Cornwallis. Lord Cornwallis, as we have seen, was specifically instructed by the Act under which he was appointed to denounce 'schemes of conquest' and to avoid wars with Indian Princes or States. With this policy he was himself in complete sympathy. But the facts in India were stronger than the theories of Leadenhall Street, or even of Whitehall, and Cornwallis, like his successors, found himself drawn irresistibly into the maelstrom of Indian politics. Under conditions so entirely lacking in stability a policy of isolation or abstention was soon found to be impossible.

Third Mysore War, 1790-2. The trouble was started by Tipu, Sultan of Mysore. Tipu was, if not the ablest of the Indian rulers of that time, certainly the most ambitious, and of all the individual antagonists we had to meet the most formidable. He was statesman enough to view the Indian situation against the background of world-politics, and thus viewing it, conceived the idea of turning the English out of India by a great Franco-Moslem alliance. Accordingly, in 1787, he

dispatched missions to Paris and Constantinople to conclude an alliance and obtain help for his projected attack upon the Company. His first move was against the Rajah of Travancore, a staunch ally of the English, who were bound by Treaty to protect a State which, though small, occupied a position in the extreme south-west of the sub-continent, strategically important to an Oceanic Empire.

Cornwallis, before commencing hostilities against Tipu, assured his diplomatic position by treaties with the Nizam and the Peshwa (June and July 1790), and then launched the attack against Tipu. The initial campaign conducted by General Medows was unsuccessful. Consequently in December 1790 Cornwallis, at the head of an imposing force, took the field in person. The coils were drawn closer and closer round the unfortunate Sultan, and step by step Cornwallis advanced towards his objective, the capture of Seringapatam. Every siege that was undertaken, every fortress that was stormed, contributed something to the final victory. Nandydroog was taken in October 1791, Severndroog in December, and early in the next year Cornwallis advanced on Seringapatam. The city was regularly invested in February, and before the end of that month Tipu surrendered. By the terms of the Peace he agreed to pay an indemnity of £3,600,000, to surrender two of his sons as hostages, and to cede half his dominions. The territory thus obtained was fairly divided between the Company, the Marathas, and the Nizam. North-eastern Mysore was annexed to the dominions of the Nizam; the north-western part to the Marathas; the western sea-board of Mysore (the Malabar coast) was annexed to the Bombay Presidency, and Madras obtained a large slice of territory on the southern and eastern slopes of the Ghats, thus giving it the command of the passes by which Hyder Ali had descended on the Carnatic and had threatened the security of Madras itself.

The whole affair represented a notable, if reluctant, achievement. Tipu's power was broken and the way prepared for its final annihilation at the hands of Cornwallis's

more brilliant successor the Earl of Mornington—known to history as the Marquess Wellesley.¹

Between the departure of Cornwallis in 1793 and the arrival of Wellesley there was an interval of five years, during which Sir John Shore, promoted to the Governor-Generalship from the ranks of the Company's service, was content to obey orders, and mark time.

Lord Wellesley (1798-1805). Lord Wellesley's period of office was, with one possible exception, the most critical, his rule was, without exception, the most brilliant in the whole history of British India. Born in 1760 he was only thirty-seven at the time of his appointment. But he had already had experience of political life in England and for four years had occupied a seat on the Board of Control. Moreover, he was an intimate friend of Henry Dundas, the President of the Board, and of the Prime Minister, Pitt. Castlereagh, who succeeded Dundas as President in 1801, was his countryman, and gave him loyal though not uncritical support. On his voyage out to India (November 1797 to April 1798) he had the good fortune to find at the Cape of Good Hope, Lord Macartney, another countryman, who, on the British occupation (1796), had become Governor at the Cape, and had previously (1780-6) been governor of Madras. By a further stroke of luck Lord Hobart (afterwards fourth Earl of Buckinghamshire), who had been Governor of Madras (1794-8), was also at the Cape, as was Major Kirkpatrick, formerly President at Gwalior and more recently at Hyderabad. A letter from Wellesley to Dundas (23 February 1798) shows how assiduously he picked the brains of these experienced administrators.

Consequently, Lord Wellesley was well primed when (17 May 1798) he reached Fort William. But his tempestuous career in India will never be seen in true perspective unless we keep constantly in mind the facts of the world-situation and realize how clearly Wellesley apprehended it. Perhaps the most brilliant if not the greatest of all the

¹ To this (Irish) Marquisate Mornington was not promoted until 1799, but throughout these pages he will be referred to as Lord Wellesley.

British rulers of India, Wellesley was something more even than that. While no man was ever at greater pains to get down to the roots of the political situation in India, Wellesley persistently visualized it against the larger background of world-politics. It was his immediate task to guard an outpost of the Empire, but he never forgot that at the same time the heart of the Empire was threatened.

At the moment when Wellesley landed in India England was sustaining, single-handed, the struggle against revolutionary France. The first Coalition was shattered: Prussia had made her own terms with the French Republic at Basle (1795); Austria had concluded peace two years later at Campo Formio. General Bonaparte was by that time pushing to the front, and from the outset to the close of his career, he knew only one enemy. He might conduct brilliant campaigns in Italy, in Germany, on the Danube; less successful ones in Spain and in Russia; but by far the most significant campaign of his career was that in Egypt (1798-9). It was directed against England. Long before England had even given a thought to Egypt, Bonaparte had fixed on it as the vital spot at which he must strike. 'Really to ruin England we must make ourselves masters of Egypt.' So he had written to the Directory before the Treaty of Campo Formio was actually signed. The Ionian isles, acquired by France under that treaty, were but stepping-stones to Egypt. Egypt should be a step on the way to India. Talleyrand represented Bonaparte's large views to the lawyers who were in control in Paris:

'Our war with England offers the most favourable opportunity for the invasion of Egypt. Threatened by an imminent landing on her shores she will not desert her coasts to prevent our enterprise in Egypt. This also offers us a chance of driving the English out of India by sending thither 15,000 troops from Cairo via Suez.'

Not until the 'Spanish ulcer' had begun to drain his strength did Bonaparte abandon that ambition. When, in November 1797, he was gazetted to the command of the

'Army of England' he accepted it not without an *arrière-pensée*.

'This little Europe'—such was the burden of his talk with intimates—'offers too contracted a field. One must go to the East to gain power and win greatness. Europe is a mere mole-hill; it is only in the East, where there are 600,000,000 of human beings, that there have ever been vast Empires and mighty revolutions. I am willing to inspect the northern coast to see what can be done. But if, as I fear, the success of a landing in England should appear doubtful, I shall make my Army of England the Army of the East and go to Egypt.'

That is precisely what he did: he kept his objective steadily in view; nor did he conceal it from his troops. 'Remember', he said, as they embarked for Egypt at Toulon, 'you are a wing of the Army of England'.¹

From Cairo Bonaparte wrote to Tipu: 'You have already been informed of my arrival on the Red Sea, with an innumerable and invincible army, full of the desire of delivering you from the iron yoke of England.' And this, as Mr. Roberts shrewdly surmises, was only one of many communications of like content.² Bonaparte's scheme miscarried. His army, it is true, was well-nigh invincible; but so was the British navy, and so long as Great Britain remained mistress of the sea, Bonaparte could send no effective assistance to Tipu, or any other Indian potentate.

The idea, however, was not abandoned. It was the basis of Bonaparte's alliance with the Czar Paul I of Russia (1801). France and Russia agreed to co-operate in an attack on India. A large force of Cossacks or Russian regulars were to march by way of Turkestan, Khiva, and Bokhara to the Upper Indus valley, while 35,000 French troops under Masséna were to descend the Danube, and going by way of the Black Sea and the Caspian make an attack on Persia, take Herat and Kandahar, and then join the Russians on the Indus. The details of the scheme were worked out to an hour and a man: twenty days were to

¹ Cf. for further account of this matter, Marriott, *Eastern Question* (Oxford, 1917), Chapter VII.

² Wellesley, p. 15.

suffice for reaching the Black Sea; fifty-five more were to see the French in Persia and another forty-five in India. At the end of June 1801 the joint attack upon India would be delivered. Towards the end of February, a large force did actually cross the Volga, but the assassination of the Czar Paul in March put an end to the project for the time, but it was vaguely revived between Alexander and Napoleon after Tilsit.

In the meantime, as we shall see, the position in India had been revolutionized by Lord Wellesley. From the outset, however, the latter took careful account of the French factor in the Indian problem. Thus, in December 1799, he dispatched John Malcolm on a mission to the Shah of Persia at Teheran. Two treaties were negotiated: a commercial treaty provided for unrestricted commerce between Persia and the Company, and the cession to the latter of certain islands in the Persian Gulf; the political treaty bound the parties to common action against Zeman Shah and the French. The Shah undertook to exclude the French altogether from his dominions, and to extirpate them if they attempted to settle there. The treaties were never formally executed, but they none the less testify to Wellesley's alertness of mind, his width of vision, and his sleepless vigilance in safeguarding against any possible danger the Dependency committed to his care.

In 1801 he would have anticipated the action too tardily taken in 1810 and sent an expedition, under the command of his brother Arthur, against the isles of France and Bourbon—'those prolific sources of intrigue in peace, and of piracy and buccaneering in war'. But Admiral Rainier, who commanded the British squadron, refused to co-operate, disdaining, it would seem, to receive orders from an East India Company Governor. The project was consequently abandoned: only to be resumed and carried to a successful issue by Lord Minto in 1810. In the meantime the losses inflicted by French privateers and cruisers upon Calcutta merchants were estimated at between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000: many magnificent Indiamen

were captured by French frigates, and French cruisers swept the seas from Madagascar to Java, without an effort at reprisals by the British squadron in Indian waters. It was a sorry spectacle, but Lord Wellesley was the last man responsible for providing it. In March 1801 he did, however, dispatch Sir David Baird with an Indian contingent to the Red Sea. It landed at Kosseir, marched across the desert to Thebes, and reached Cairo in August only to learn that the French had just left the city and agreed to evacuate Egypt. But the expedition was the first of many intimations to the enemies of England that her military resources were not limited by Europe. To return to India. It was, of course, about the internal condition of his great Province that Wellesley was primarily concerned. He had good reason to be. The Nizam, after his defeat by the Marathas at Kharda (1795), had, in disgust at what he deemed the defection of Sir John Shore, handed over the training of his army to French officers. Wellesley, on his arrival in India, learnt with concern that the Nizam could count on an army of some 14,000 men, armed, trained, and disciplined on the French model and commanded by a French soldier, François Raymond. A much greater Frenchman, de Boigne, had taken service under Sindhia, and trained and organized the army which made his master the most powerful among the Indian princes of the day. De Boigne maintained cordial relations with the English Company, under whom he had previously served, and when in 1795 Sir John Shore was confronted by a mutiny among the Bengal officers, de Boigne offered to send a cavalry regiment, officered by Europeans, to his assistance. A year later, when leaving India for good, he impressed on Sindhia that friendship with the English was his best policy. Perron, another Frenchman, succeeded to de Boigne's place under Sindhia, and built up in north-west India an almost independent power of formidable extent and of great strategical strength. He received tribute from the Rajput States of Jodhpur and Jaipur and exercised over a large tract of territory most of the attributes of sovereignty.

'He possessed', writes a contemporary, 'the important fortress of Agra, imperial Delhi, and the person of the Great Mogul—he occupied the richest province of the Doab—he had established cantonments for twenty thousand men, and constructed a fortress (Aligarh) of almost impregnable strength, within the Delta of the rivers Jumna and Ganges.'

Well might Wellesley speak of 'the French State erected by Mr. Perron on the Jumna'. The influence of Frenchmen, if not of France, was, then, widely pervasive, during these years, in India; but it was the French proclivities of Tipu which caused immediate anxiety to the new Governor-General.

Towards the end of 1797 Tipu, with statesmanlike grasp of the world-situation, dispatched a mission to Mauritius to propose an alliance with the French Republic for the expulsion of the English from India. 'Happy moment!' wrote Tipu, 'The time is come when I can deposit in the bosom of my friends the hatred which I bear against these oppressors of the human race.' Once the English were expelled, Bombay should be handed over to France.

The French Governor of the Mauritius eagerly accepted the advances of Tipu, and proclaimed to the world that Tipu was only waiting for French assistance 'to declare war on the English, whom he ardently desired to expel from India'. The statement was as accurate as it was inopportune. Little practical assistance could be afforded by Mauritius. On the day when Wellesley landed at Fort St. George on his way to Calcutta (26 April 1798) about 100 Frenchmen and half-castes from Mauritius landed at Mangalore. Thence they made their way to Seringapatam, organized a Jacobin club under the presidency of 'Citizen Tipu'; ostentatiously burned the emblems of Royalty; planted a tree of liberty, and proclaimed the French Republic one and indivisible.

Historians can afford to dismiss such proceedings as mere burlesque: Wellesley could not. Had he treated them as farce, they might have turned to tragedy.

He took his measures promptly. He dealt first with the

¹ Quoted *op. Roberts, Wellesley*, p. 223.

Treaty
with the
Nizam.

Nizam. A military demonstration at Hyderabad, skilfully planned and tactfully executed, brought the Nizam to heel. Notwithstanding the estrangement induced by Sir John Shore's 'desertion', the Nizam agreed to disband his 'French' army of 14,000 men, and to receive instead six battalions commanded by British officers, and to find nearly £250,000 a year for their maintenance. These terms were, after the defeat of Tipu, amended.

The Peshwa, with whom Wellesley dealt next, was less complaisant than the Nizam, but eventually agreed to join the league against Mysore.

Fourth
Mysore
War,
1799.

Tipu, now completely isolated, was required to disarm and renounce his French alliance. He naturally played for time; but Wellesley would tolerate no evasion and on 22 February 1799 declared war. Seringapatam was invested at the beginning of April and on 4 May was carried by an assault. Tipu fell fighting in the breach. The moral effect of this brief and brilliant campaign was felt from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. No single event since Clive's victory at Plassey had, as most competent critics agree, so deeply impressed native imagination.

Wellesley used his resounding victory with moderation. The sons of Tipu were generously, indeed lavishly, provided for; Mysore, stripped of the accretions procured by its Moslem rulers, was restored to the infant representative of the Hindu dynasty which had previously (though for not more than a century) occupied the throne; the rest of the country was assigned to the English and their allies. The Company retained the great fortress of Seringapatam, and the acquisition of Kanara and Coimbatore gave them command over the greater part of the south-eastern coast of the peninsula. The Nizam obtained a substantial slice of territory on the north-east of Mysore; another slice on the north-west was offered, on certain conditions, to the Peshwa, and on his refusal was divided between the Company and the Nizam.

Tanjore
and the
Carnatic.

The position of the Company in Southern India was finally rounded off by the acquisition of Tanjore and the

Carnatic. The Rajah of Tanjore was induced to resign the administration of his petty State in return for an annuity of £40,000 a year (October 1799). The death of the Nawab of the Carnatic (July 1801) gave Wellesley the opportunity of taking over the administration of that province also. The Nawab's rule had been a curse to his own subjects and a scandal to the Company by whom he was protected and maintained. Documents found at Seringapatam were said to prove that the Nawab had intrigued with Tipu against his protectors, and it was held that his throne was thereby forfeited. But even the most friendly critics of Lord Wellesley agree that it would have been more straightforward, instead of relying upon doubtful evidence, simply to have taken over the province and to have justified annexation by the benefits conferred upon an oppressed and ill-governed people. The new Nawab was allowed to retain an empty title, and received one-fifth of the revenues of his former State.

As to the general effect of the events summarized in preceding paragraphs there can be no two opinions. The death of Tipu Sultan removed from the Indian scene the most inveterate, the most implacable and the most fanatical, perhaps the most formidable enemy encountered by the Company in its contest with the 'Native' Powers of India. But there was much in the career and character of Tipu, despite the vehemence of his anti-British sentiments, to extort respect and even admiration. If he had no more right than we had to claim territorial sovereignty in India, he had no less. If between ourselves and the French it was a war *à outrance*; so was it between Tipu and ourselves. We were equally adventurers in the field of Indian politics. If we had a right to seek the aid of the Nizam and the Peshwa to subdue Tipu; Tipu had a right to call in the French to help in expelling us from the soil of India. We succeeded; he failed. But he displayed consistent courage, much persistence, and no little skill. While, then, we must rejoice in his defeat, we can respect his splendid effort to avert it.

Henceforward the authority of the English Company was unquestioned in the Deccan.

Oudh. Having thus established British power in the southern part of the Peninsula, Wellesley turned his attention to the north-west. It was demanded partly by the condition of affairs in Oudh, and even more peremptorily by the renewal of invasion from Afghanistan.

The condition of Oudh under the Viziers had for many years been causing great concern to successive Governors-General. The government of the Viziers, as weak as it was rapacious and oppressive, invited attack from the north-west and thus constituted a real menace to the security of the Company's possessions in Bengal. Added to this was the scandal raised by the presence in Oudh of numbers of unofficial Englishmen—the 'English locusts', as Wellesley termed them, who were filling their pockets at the expense of the miserable subjects of the Vizier. Cornwallis had refused to withdraw or even diminish the British force stationed in Oudh, and in 1795 Sir John Shore had warned Dundas that the country was 'in the precise condition to tempt a rebellion'. 'Disaffection and anarchy', he wrote, 'prevail throughout, and nothing but the presence of our two brigades prevents insurrection.'

In 1796 a fresh menace appeared in the north-west. In that year Zeman Shah—the 'King of Kabul' as the Duke of Wellington called him—suddenly appeared with over 30,000 Afghans at Lahore. The fifth of twenty-three sons of Taimur Shah, Zeman was a grandson of the famous Ahmad Shah Durani who, some fifty years earlier, had snatched the Punjab from the Mogul, and by the sack of Delhi had spread consternation throughout north-western India. Was the grandson about to renew the exploits of the grandfather? As a fact he did not; domestic troubles recalled him to Kabul in 1797, but in 1798 he again advanced and insolently demanded that the Vizier-Nawab and the Company should join him in an attack on the Marathas, and in restoring to power the blind old Emperor

Shah Alam. He added that 'he should consider our not joining his royal standard, and our not assisting him in the restoration of Shah Alam, and in the total expulsion of the Marathas, in the light of an act of disobedience and enmity'. The menace contained in this message did not materialize; Zeman again retreated in January 1799; but for Wellesley to have ignored demands so insolent and menacing would have been inexcusable; they go far to justify his dealings with the 'buffer-state' of Oudh.

Towards the close of the year 1799 Lord Wellesley called upon the Nawab-Vizier to dismiss his own troops, and to replace them by increasing the force, already considerable, of the Company's troops. The Vizier had lately appealed to the Company to protect him against his own army, described by Sir James Craig, the Commander-in-Chief, as 'worse than useless, as dangerous, and of the nature of an enemy's fortress in his rear'. Moreover, Wellesley's requisition was within the terms of existing treaties. Not unnaturally, however, the Vizier demurred to the intrusion of additional troops, not under his orders, and more particularly to the expense of paying them. Nevertheless, Lord Wellesley persisted, and after prolonged negotiations, somewhat peremptorily conducted on the part of the Governor-General, the wretched Vizier perforce gave way. By a Treaty concluded on 10 November 1801, the Nawab ceded to the Company, in commutation for a subsidy, the territory of Rohilkhand and the Doab—the land lying between the Ganges and the Jumna. He also undertook to introduce better government in his own curtailed dominions. Thus, as Arthur Wellesley complacently observed, 'all was gain and strength without the smallest disadvantage or weakness'. A rampart was interposed between Bengal on the one side, and the Marathas, Sikhs, and Afghans on the other; we got rid of a 'useless and dangerous body of troops . . . ready at all times to join an invading enemy'; above all, we secured the blessing of decent government to the ill-governed subjects of the Vizier. Well might Arthur Wellesley conclude that 'this arrange-

ment has been advantageous, and has proved satisfactory to both the parties to it'.¹ More detached critics are agreed that the end achieved was better than the means employed.

A similar principle had been already adopted in dealing with the Nizam. The Treaty made with the Nizam on the eve of the war with Tipu (1798) was provisional; it was replaced, after the brilliant close of the campaign, by a definitive arrangement.

Sub- Under this Subsidiary Treaty of 1800 the Nizam and his
 sidiary dominions were taken under the protection of the British
 Treaty Government. The preamble declared in terms that the
 with the Nizam and the Company 'are in fact become one and the
 1800. same in interest, policy, friendship and honour'. He had
 already dismissed his French officers and disbanded the
 troops they had trained. Henceforward he was to rely on
 the British for defence against all his enemies. The sub-
 sidiary force was increased to eight battalions, but it was
 no longer to be paid by the Nizam. The subsidies due under
 the Treaty of 1798 were generally in arrear, and the pay-
 ment of them not only caused constant friction between
 the officers of the Company and the Nizam but also im-
 posed a grievous burden on his subjects. Accordingly in
 1800 the money payment was remitted altogether, and in
 lieu thereof the Nizam made over to the Company those
 territories of Tipu which had fallen to his share under the
 Treaties of 1792 and 1799. The arrangement was con-
 venient and profitable to all concerned. The Nizam had
 never really established his authority in those districts,
 and had never received any revenue from them. On the
 other hand, the confusion which prevailed there, while
 offering an irresistible invitation to the Marathas was, as
 Wellington observed, 'highly prejudicial to the British
 interests in Mysore and in the Company's recently
 acquired countries'. Under British administration the
 territories thus surrendered provided a revenue amply
 sufficient for the payment of the subsidiary forces and
 the expenses of their own government. Finally, the Nizam

¹ *Wellington Despatches*, p. 13.

confirmed the agreement not to take any European into his service without the consent of the British Government.

Lord Wellesley was now free to deal with the Marathas. ^{The Marathas.} Recent events had greatly weakened, if they had not imperilled, the position of these restless marauders. The sphere of their profitable activities had been seriously curtailed by the rapid extension of the Company's dominions, and by the protection guaranteed under subsidiary Treaties to Indian princes, notably to the Nizam. The rule of the Marathas at this time extended from sea to sea, from Bassein and Surat in the west to the Bay of Bengal, from Mysore in the south up to Delhi in the north. The old emperor, Shah Alam, was a prisoner in their hands, and such prestige and authority as he could still claim accrued in fact to them. But their organization was a loose one: the Rajah of Satara, the titular head of the Confederacy, was, like the Mogul, a State prisoner, and the authority of the Peshwa was only intermittently acknowledged by the great chieftains of the Confederacy, Sindhia, Holkar, the Bhonsla Rajah of Berar (or Nagpur), and the Gaekwar of Baroda.

Nor did these chieftains live in amity among themselves. Had they done so the task of Wellesley and (later on) of Lord Hastings would have been infinitely more difficult. The crisis was precipitated in 1800 by the death at Poona of Nana Farnavis, the shrewd statesman who had for a quarter of a century exercised the authority of the Peshwa, and had alone maintained some semblance of unity in the Confederacy. 'With him', wrote the Resident at Poona, 'departed all the wisdom and moderation of the Maratha Government.'

Wisdom and moderation were, indeed, conspicuously absent from the counsels of the Marathas from this time onwards until their final overthrow by Lord Hastings in 1818. Yet the anarchical condition of Hindustan^{*} permitted Holkar and Sindhia to inflict shrewd blows on each other and to cause much embarrassment to the English

* 'Hindustan' is here used in the older and narrower sense = Northern India.

Company. 'Nothing', writes Marshman (p. 261), 'gives us a clearer view of the anarchy and wretchedness of Hindustan at this period than the ease with which [Holkar] was able in the space of two years [1800-1] to collect under his standard by the hope of plunder a force of 70,000 Pindharees and Bheels, Afghans, and Marathas.' At the head of this force Holkar invaded Malwa and laid half the country in waste before Sindhia could bring him to battle and inflict a crushing defeat upon him (14 October 1801). Then Sindhia in turn reduced Indore to ruins. A year later Holkar had his revenge, marched into the Peshwa's country, then under the protection of Sindhia, and inflicted on the combined armies of the Peshwa and Sindhia a crushing defeat under the walls of Poona itself (25 October 1802). The Peshwa, hotly pursued by Holkar, fled to the coast and was carried on a ship furnished by the Bombay Government to Bassein.

Treaty of
Bassein,
31 Decem-
ber, 1802. At Bassein he concluded with the Company the famous Treaty known by the name of the town. By general consent that Treaty was one of the most important in the history of British India. It was the crown and completion of Lord Wellesley's subsidiary system. The Company was to furnish, and the Peshwa agreed to receive in his territory, a permanent subsidiary force of not less than 6,000 regular native infantry with the usual proportion of European artillery and guns, and appropriate equipment of stores and munitions. The Peshwa was to assign to the Company certain scheduled districts¹ yielding 26 lacs for the maintenance of the forces; to retain no Europeans in his service, and to engage not to enter into any treaties or negotiations with 'any other power whatever' without the consent of the Company, who, apart from this wide provision, repudiated all right of interference with the absolute sovereignty of the Peshwa. He was bound, however, to accept the arbitration of the Company in all disputes with other powers and in particular with the Nizam.²

¹ These districts were, a year later, exchanged for territory in Bundelkhand.

² Text in Aitchison, *Treaties and Lands*, vi. 52, and abbreviated in Muir, *op. cit.*, pp. 239-40.

No words can exaggerate the significance of this Treaty, as is proved, indeed, by the apprehensions it excited in the minds of the Home authorities. Lord Castlereagh, on behalf of the Board of Control, protested against its terms, but was effectively and conclusively answered by Arthur Wellesley, who described it as 'a wise, just and politic measure'. Sir John Malcolm defended it on the eminently sensible ground that in dealing with the Marathas 'it will invariably be found safer to direct our policy to the reduction of their means of offence, than to place any confidence in our happy management of the feelings of a people whose trade is war, and the sole object of whose policy is plunder'. Even so cautious an administrator as Sir George Barlow held it to be absolutely necessary that 'no native State should be left to exist in India which is not upheld by the British Power, or the political conduct of which is not under its absolute control'. 'The restoration', he added, 'of the head of the Maratha Empire to his government through the influence of the British power, in fact, has placed all the remaining States of India in this dependent relation to the British Government.' More pithy and not less apposite is the comment of Mr. Owen, the editor of *The Wellington Despatches*: 'Previously there existed a British Empire in India; the Treaty gave the Company the Empire of India.'¹

The Treaty was followed not by the lasting tranquillity anticipated by the brothers Wellesley but by a campaign, as brilliant as it was brief, against Sindhia and the Rajah of Berar. In December 1803 the Peshwa was restored to his throne at Poona by Arthur Wellesley; in August the war with Sindhia and the Rajah of Berar, provoked by their threatened attack on the Nizam, broke out; in December it was concluded on terms commensurate with the great victories won by Arthur Wellesley at Assaye and Argaon, and by Lord Lake at Laswari, Aligarh, Agra, and Delhi. The Rajah agreed to submit all disputes

¹ The last three passages are quoted; *op. Roberts's Wellesley*, pp. 205, 294.

between himself and the Nizam, or the Peshwa, to British arbitration and to cede the province of Cuttack, with Balasor, to the Company. The latter acquisition was invaluable, constituting, as it did, the last link of the chain connecting Bengal with Madras. Sindhia recognized the Treaty of Bassein, concluded a subsidiary alliance with the Company, and surrendered much territory. The Company succeeded to the overlordship of Agra and Delhi, became the protector of the old Mogul Emperor, and acquired large districts in Bundelkhand and Gujarat.

Holkar, who had held aloof from his Confederates in 1803, compelled Wellesley to make war on him in 1804, but the campaign, notable for Lake's failure after four successive assaults to capture Bhartpur, was disastrous to British prestige. Delhi was with difficulty defended, and the war ended in 1805. Notwithstanding the fact that before it ended Lake had completely retrieved the position, peace was concluded on terms which restored much of their prestige and some of their territories to the Marathas, abandoned to their tender mercies some of the Rajput princes who had given us help in the campaign, and dealt a grievous though not irretrievable blow at British prestige.

That peace, needless to say, was not negotiated by Lord Wellesley, who had been recalled by the Directors, and had left India in August 1805.

The seven years of Lord Wellesley's rule will be for ever memorable in the history of India. Assisted by two brothers, hardly less brilliantly gifted than himself, he revolutionized the position of his countrymen in the East. He found the English Company one of several Powers in India; he left it indisputably paramount. That was his deliberate purpose. He achieved it. His work has not lacked critics; nor is it easy to justify his methods, if examined microscopically and in detail. His policy can be endorsed, his methods justified, only on broad and general grounds. The situation must be considered as a whole. It

was his task to hold an outpost of Empire at a time when that Empire was attacked by the greatest soldier, one of the greatest statesmen, of modern times. To have held it was no small achievement. But Wellesley did more. He greatly extended the British dominions. Not that he was merely a vulgar conqueror, driven to annexation after annexation by sheer lust of territory. Rather was he an implacable foe to incompetence, corruption, and oppression. Where he saw oppression he was all eagerness to crush the oppressor; where he saw suffering he longed to alleviate it. The pleas he advanced for this annexation or for that may sound to the sheltered student, surveying the situation from the calm seclusion of a cloistered library, to be specious to the verge of sophistry. It is the unhappy lot of statesmen who serve parliamentary masters to be compelled, not infrequently, to justify their policy not on the true ground, which is often the stronger ground, but on the grounds best calculated to obtain a verdict from a common jury.

Was it in the highest interests of the 'toiling masses' of India (and in India the masses do toil incessantly) that the rule of the 'native' Princes, the petty Rajahs, the military adventurers and their adroit and greedy ministers, should be perpetuated, after their rule had become in most cases a sham, in many a scandal? Was it better or worse for India, as a whole, that the power of the Nawabs and Rajahs should pass to the pro-consuls of a Western people, not too well informed about Indian affairs, but generously anxious that no wrong should be done in their name, and determined that the justice and good government which they themselves enjoy should, as far as possible, be extended to less fortunate peoples, living under wholly different conditions in distant lands?

By the answer to these questions, broadly stated, not by detailed reference to particular transactions, Lord Wellesley himself and the masters he served so devotedly but so defiantly, must, when arraigned before the final court of historical appeal, evidently stand or fall.

VIII

TERRITORIAL EXPANSION AND SOCIAL REFORM (1805-32)

Lord Wellesley. LORD WELLESLEY'S régime was undeniably one of the most important as it was manifestly the most brilliant in the history of British India. But his work was accomplished in flat defiance of the orders of his masters at home, and his treatment of Indian Princes was not infrequently high-handed and harsh. Little wonder then that by many of his countrymen he was severely judged, that by some he was bitterly attacked, and that the returning Pro-Consul should have been received with a lack of ceremony, not to say a callous and chilling neglect, which to those who view his work in historical perspective seems to suggest shameful ingratitude. More than once an obscure private member tried to induce the House of Commons to prefer an impeachment against him; but from that blunder the House and country were saved by the recent and unhappy precedent of Warren Hastings. Fortunately Lord Wellesley, when he returned from India, was still a young man; he was blessed with a buoyant temperament and with the tenacity characteristic of his race. Moreover, the days were critical; his country could not afford to let talents so brilliant remain unemployed. Accordingly, after a short interval of rest, he was again called to high office under the Crown: ambassador in Madrid in 1809, he was Foreign Secretary 1810-12; he was asked to form a Coalition Government in 1812, but failed in the attempt; he was twice Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and twice held high office in the Household; and he died in advanced old age (1842), neither unhonoured nor unsung. With his later career, however, this narrative is not concerned.

Wellesley's immediate successors in India, with the exception of Lord William Bentinck, had little more to do than to fill in the details of a picture, the main lines of

which he had so firmly drawn. Their work, therefore, may, with the exception noted, be treated more summarily.

On the resignation of Lord Wellesley, Lord Cornwallis, Lord Cornwallis and Sir George Barlow, 1805-7. though now in his sixty-seventh year and stricken in health, was persuaded, much against his own will and better judgement, to return to India. The Directors were greatly alarmed by the responsibilities, financial and political, which Wellesley's policy had imposed upon them, and were determined to put a peremptory stop to all further advance. Lord Cornwallis went out with precise instructions to that effect, and fully determined to obey them. Before he had been in India three months, however, he died, and Sir George Barlow, an old servant of the Company, was appointed to succeed him. Barlow, though an admirable official, was unequal to the chief command, and his rule was disastrous. His first task was, by a treaty with Holkar, to bring the Maratha war to a conclusion. Barlow was firmly persuaded that there were only two alternatives open to the British Government in India: either to impose its rule on all the States of India, or to secure immunity from attack by leaving the Indian Rajahs free to quarrel among themselves. The latter policy, truly described as a policy of 'disgrace without recompense, treaties without security, and peace without tranquillity', was the one he actually adopted. Lord Lake was strongly opposed to Barlow, holding that the petty States if left to themselves would not merely quarrel with each other, but would call in the aid of the native Powers in their vicinity. Thus large armies of irregulars would be for ever contending upon the frontier of the most fertile Provinces of the British Government, and a large military force would in consequence have to be maintained in a constant state of preparation to protect the British Provinces against their depredations. Lord Lake's anticipations were only too promptly and too accurately fulfilled. No sooner was British protection withdrawn from the Rajput States than they were left open to the attacks of the Marathas. The Rajput Chiefs again invoked the help of the British Govern-

ment and offered to make over half their territory to the Company if only they could be secure in possession of the remainder. They pointed out, perhaps with questionable accuracy, that there had always been in India some supreme Power to which the weak could confidently look for protection against the ambition and rapacity of the strong. The Company, they declared, had now attained that paramount position, and were bound to fulfil the responsibilities attached to it. To these appeals Barlow turned a deaf ear; Rajputana was consequently left to the tender mercy of the Maratha chieftains. For cruelties inflicted by the Marathas upon those who under Lord Wellesley had been proud to be the dependent allies of the British Government, Barlow was held, not without justification, to be largely responsible. Weakness was requited by disaffection, and the outbreak of a serious mutiny among the Madras Sepoys at Vellore brought the rule of Sir George Barlow to an abrupt and inglorious end.

Lord
Minto,
1807-13.

He was succeeded (1807) by Lord Minto, a man of firm character, cool head, and sound judgement. Like his predecessor he was straitly charged to extricate the Company from their embarrassments, and to curtail, as far as possible, their responsibilities. But, though loyal to his instructions, he speedily found that retrogression was impossible, and that to stand still was hardly more easy. His reign was, however, remarkable, if not for territorial annexations, for the opening of diplomatic relations with Asiatic States on the Indian frontiers.

Ranjit
Singh.

In 1809 he concluded a treaty with Ranjit Singh, the famous ruler who had lately consolidated the trans-Sutlej Sikhs into a powerful confederacy and had built up a great power in the Punjab. At the moment, Ranjit Singh was threatening the Sikhs on the south of the Sutlej, and the latter sent a deputation to Delhi to implore British protection. Lord Minto thereupon dispatched a young civilian, Mr. (afterwards Sir Charles) Metcalfe, on an embassy to Lahore. The object of his mission was twofold: on the one hand to frustrate Ranjit Singh's plans for the extension

of his dominion southwards; on the other, to invite his co-operation in resisting any possible invasion of India from the north-west. The grandiose designs of Napoleon, already alluded to, were still agitating the minds of British statesmen, both in India and at home. But, as we have seen, the European situation from 1808 onwards demanded all the attention and energies of Napoleon, and his far-eastern schemes did not materialize. Napoleon, however, was not without a coadjutor, and the precautions originally taken against France were subsequently found serviceable when the threatened antagonist was not France but Russia. Metcalfe's mission was as successful as it was important. In 1809 he concluded a treaty with Ranjit Singh, establishing perpetual amity between the British Government and the State of Lahore. The British Government undertook not to interfere with the territories and subjects of Ranjit Singh to the north of the Sutlej, while the latter promised neither to commit nor suffer any encroachments upon the chiefs under British protection to the south of that river. The treaty consisting of only fifteen lines was faithfully observed by Ranjit Singh until his death. In the whole history of British India there are, as Marshman truly says, 'few incidents of more romantic interest than the arrest of this haughty Prince in the full career of success by a youth of twenty-four'.

A second embassy was dispatched under Mountstuart Elphinstone to the Amir of Afghanistan, but the results were not immediately important and may be more conveniently considered later on in connexion with the policy of Lord Auckland. A third embassy was dispatched to Teheran under Colonel Malcolm. Unfortunately some confusion was caused by the fact that a similar mission was simultaneously dispatched from England under Sir Harford Jones, and it was eventually decided to establish a permanent embassy at Teheran to be served direct from England. But it was not only by extended diplomacy that Lord Minto sought to make British India secure.

For more than a century, as we have seen, the Mauritius Ceylon.

had been the principal connecting link between France and her possessions in the East. More recently it had supplied a base for the French cruisers and privateers, which had preyed upon English commerce in the Indian Ocean. Accordingly, in 1810 Lord Minto sent an expedition, which captured this important position, and the island was retained by Great Britain together with the Seychelles at the definitive Peace of 1814. Java, on the other hand, which was also captured in 1810, was at the Peace handed back to the Dutch from whom it had been taken by the French. Another Dependency of the Dutch East India Company, Ceylon, was also retained at the Peace of 1814. The capture of Ceylon in 1796 by an enterprising Scottish Professor from St. Andrews, Dr. Hugh Cleghorn, is one of the most romantic incidents in the long struggle between England and revolutionary France. Ceylon was at that time defended mainly by a Swiss regiment in the pay of the Dutch Government. Dr. Cleghorn conceived the ingenious notion of purchasing the regiment from the Comte de Meuron, its proprietor, and carried de Meuron himself off to India to superintend the completion of the bargain.¹ The Peace which finally secured to us Ceylon and the Mauritius also confirmed us in the possession, effected partly by conquest and partly by purchase, of Cape Colony. Thus were the main stations on the great oceanic route from Europe to the Far East vested, securely and appropriately, in the hands of the Power which had become paramount in India.

Lord Minto was in 1813 succeeded by Lord Moira, afterwards the Marquis of Hastings.² Lord Moira had previously distinguished himself during the War of American Independence and also during the Napoleonic Wars. In 1812, he had been associated with Lord Wellesley in the attempt to form a Ministry, but in the following year accepted the Governor-Generalship of Bengal. Like his immediate pre-

¹ The story may be read in *The Cleghorn Papers*, Edinburgh, 1927.

² To avoid confusion with Warren Hastings, Lord Hastings, though advanced to the marquise in 1817, will in this narrative be alluded to by his earlier title of Lord Moira.

decessors he was sent out with strict injunctions to avoid the extension of responsibilities. The sequel will show that, with the best intentions, he failed to observe them. He had not been long in India before he grasped the true position of affairs, and declared that, as things were, we had no alternative but 'to render the British Government paramount in effect if not declaredly so; to hold the other states as vassals, though not in name; and to oblige them, in return for our guarantee of their possessions, to perform the two great feudatory duties of supporting our rule with all their forces, and submitting their mutual differences to our arbitration'. During a reign of ten years he consistently gave effect to the principles thus laid down.

His first war was forced upon him by the restlessness and encroachments of the Gurkhas of Nepal, generally known as the 'Highlanders of India'. The Gurkhas had long been a terror to their neighbours on the north-east frontier of India; they had paid no heed to the repeated remonstrances of Barlow and Minto, and in 1814 Moira was compelled to declare war. The Gurkhas, who have proved themselves, alike as enemies and as confederates, to be some of the most gallant fighters in India, offered a most obstinate resistance, but, after two years' hard fighting, General Ochterlony was able to dictate the terms of the Peace of Segauli (Dec. 1816). That Treaty has defined the relations of Nepal with British India from that day to this. The Gurkhas, having made a splendid fight, frankly accepted defeat, and withdrew from their advanced posts in the outer ranges of the Himalayas. The strip of territory, thus acquired, proved a great boon to British administration in India, for within it are to be found the health-giving stations of Simla, Massuri, and Naini Tal. The significance of our territorial acquisitions is thus estimated by Sir Alfred Lyall:

The Gurkhas of Nepal.

'All the hill country that now overhangs Rohilkund and the north-west provinces up to the Jumna River fell into our hands. The Anglo-Indian frontier was carried up to and beyond the watershed of the highest mountain, separating India from

Tibet or from Cathay, and the English dominion thus became conterminous, for the first time, with the Chinese Empire, whose Government has ever since observed our proceedings with marked and intelligible solicitude.'

The Pindaris. Having successfully dealt with the Gurkhas, Lord Moira next turned his attention to the pacification of Central India. Life and property had long been rendered insecure, in that district, by the plundering raids of bands of freebooters, known as the Pindaris. These 'human jackals', as they have been aptly called, were, as Sir William Hunter has said, 'merely plundering bands of no common race and without any common religion . . . they represented the débris of the Mogul Empire, the broken men who had not been incorporated either by the local Mohammedan or Hindu Powers which sprang out of its ruins.' No Government worthy of the name could tolerate the continued existence of a social pest of this character, and Moira determined, by one swift, strong blow, to root it out. The Pindaris enjoyed the sympathy, if not the actual support, of most of the Maratha Chieftains, to whose trade they had succeeded when the Marathas became rather superior to their old work. To proceed against them with anything less than overwhelming force would, therefore, almost certainly have brought down upon us a very powerful combination. Disaster might well have ensued. Moira accordingly collected a great army of one hundred and twenty thousand men and hunted down and cut to pieces these formidable marauders. It was a great task, well accomplished.

The last Maratha War, 1817-18. A greater one remained. Sir Alfred Lyall has pointed out with unanswerable force that in one sense the advance of British territorial power in India had thus far only made things worse for the miserable inhabitants. By introducing ordered government into certain parts of India we did indeed contract the area of disorder, but within that contracted area it was intensified. Lord Moira, accordingly, decided that the time had come for completing the work begun by Lord Wellesley and finally extinguishing the power of the Marathas. In 1817 the last great confederacy

of the Marathas was formed between the Peshwa, Holkar, and the Rajah of Nagpur (Berar). Moira attacked and defeated their forces in detail and by 1818 their power was crushed for ever. The dominions of the Peshwa were annexed to the Bombay Presidency, and he himself was allowed to retire, on a pension of £80,000 a year, to Bithur, near Cawnpore. In his retirement, he reared an adopted son in the tradition of hatred against the British Government. That son, the notorious Nana Sahib, flashed for a sinister moment across the page of Indian history in the Mutiny, but with his mysterious disappearance in 1858 the tale of the Maratha Confederacy dies down into silence. Meanwhile, infants had been placed on the forfeited thrones of Holkar and the Rajah of Nagpur, the administration of their dominions being placed in the hands of British residents. About the same time the Rajput princes accepted the position of feudatories under the British Government in India. Thus did Lord Moira complete the work of Wellesley and proclaim not by words only, but by unmistakable deeds, that the British Company had become the paramount power in India, and that its feudatories might confidently look to it for protection. 'The map of India, as drawn by Lord Hastings, remained substantially unchanged until the time of Lord Dalhousie.' But, as Sir William Hunter proceeds to observe: 'The proudest boast of Lord Hastings and Sir John Malcolm was, not that they had advanced the British frontier, but that they had conferred the blessings of peace and good government upon millions who had groaned under the extortions of the Marathas and Pindaris.' To quote Lord Moira's own words: 'We have been wantonly assailed, we have conquered the unprovoked enemy, we have retained the possessions wrested from him, not only as a legitimate compensation for the peril and expense forced on us, but also on considerations of self-defence.'

Moira left India in 1822. On his resignation Mr. George Canning was appointed to succeed him. It is an interesting speculation, how the future of India might have been

Lord Amherst,
1822-8.

affected had Canning gone out to anticipate the work of his son; but though interesting it is idle. The death of Lord Castlereagh opened to his old rival not only the leadership of the House of Commons but the Foreign Office. Canning accepted them, and so gave to the world what India might otherwise have exclusively enjoyed. His place was supplied by Lord Amherst, whose reign is memorable for the first expedition to Burma, the capture of Bhartpur, and the annexation of the dominions belonging to its Rajah.

**First
Burmese
War.** The eastern frontiers of Bengal had for some time past been threatened by the advance of the Kingdom of Burma, and though the intermediate tribes had been taken under British protection, the precaution proved inadequate to defend them against the encroachments of their neighbours. To the repeated remonstrances of Lord Amherst, the King of Burma paid no heed and in 1824 the Governor-General was compelled to declare war. The war is memorable for two reasons. In the first place it afforded a premonition of the Mutiny. The Bengal Sepoys, alarmed by the prospect of an oversea expedition, refused, quite intelligibly, to forfeit their caste by crossing the 'black water'. The 47th Native Infantry openly mutinied at Barrackpur and had to be ruthlessly shot down. The expedition was delayed, but not of course abandoned. The ensuing war, though costly both in lives and money, was not without significant results. The British forces eventually penetrated to Ava, and there Lord Amherst dictated a peace under the terms of which the King of Burma agreed to recognize the English Protectorate over Upper Assam, Cachar, and Manipur, and to cede the maritime provinces of Arakan and Tenasserim. Thus, as Sir Alfred Lyall points out, 'a non-Indian people was for the first time brought within the jurisdiction of the Indian Empire.'

**Capture
of Bhart-
pur.** A year after the conclusion of the Burmese War Lord Amherst launched another expedition under the command of Lord Combermere against the Central Indian State of Bhartpur. The death of the reigning Rajah and the disputed succession which thereupon, as so often, ensued,

offered an opportunity which Amherst felt compelled, not without some reluctance, to accept. The main incident of the expedition—the successful capture of Bhartpur—had more than military significance. Lord Lake had failed in a similar enterprise in 1805 and his failure had created the impression that the fortress was impregnable even against British arms. Lord Combermere's brilliant victory effaced an impression which, among peoples who recognized only the law of the stronger, might well have become a serious political danger.

Lord Amherst's ambitious policy did not lack the justification of success, but even that failed to commend it to his masters. The Directors in Leadenhall Street were greatly alarmed by the increasing expenditure incurred by their servants in India. Whitehall was equally aghast at the accumulating load of political responsibilities. Amherst, therefore, was recalled in 1827, and the Governor-Generalship was offered to Mountstuart Elphinstone, one of the ablest and most experienced servants of the Company. On his refusal it was accepted by Lord William Bentinck.

Bentinck had not only had wide experience of soldiering in Europe, but had served in India as a Governor. He was a man of liberal views and generous sympathies, but the Duke of Wellington had a poor opinion of him both as soldier and administrator. While in command of the English troops in Sicily in 1812, Bentinck had characteristically encouraged the Sicilians to remodel their constitution on English lines, which proved to be as little suited to their traditions as to their requirements. In 1814 he had impulsively held out hopes to the Genoese which the British Government were unable to fulfil. Earlier in his career he had been Governor of Madras, but his appointment had been abruptly terminated by his failure to cope with the Sepoy mutiny at Vellore (1807). This was the man selected to succeed Lord Amherst as Governor-General in 1828. As to the wisdom of the policy, which he was the first to inaugurate, opinion has, from that day to

Lord
William
Bentinck
(1828-
35).

this, been very sharply divided. He went out to India, on the one hand under strict injunctions to curtail expenditure and to refrain from adding to the territories already acquired; on the other, with the firm conviction, founded on his own experience and observation, that the time had come for the initiation of a new policy in India. He was not, indeed, under any illusions as to the greatness of the work achieved by his predecessors in office:

'Wars of great and petty chieftains, unwarranted in their origin and unprincipled in their conduct, for the sole object of robbery and plunder, have depopulated and laid waste the general face of this unhappy country. Justice, order, consideration of public and private rights, nowhere appear in relief of this melancholy picture. Happily a period has arrived to these barbarous excesses. For the first time the blessings of universal tranquillity may be expected. That system of policy, which could embrace the whole of India, which could comprehend in one bond of mutual defence and reciprocal forbearance, the predatory chiefs of this great Empire deserves the admiration of all the civilized world. That system which has founded British greatness upon Indian happiness demands in a particular manner the thanks and applause of this country.'

Those words were written before the close of Lord Wellesley's administration, when Bentinck himself was Governor of Madras. They had gained greatly in force during the twenty years which intervened before his return as Governor-General. During those years not only had the work of Lord Wellesley been extended and completed by Lord Minto, Lord Hastings, and Lord Amherst, but a new significance had been given to the concluding words of Bentinck's minute by the work of 'a remarkable group of scholar-statesmen' (the description is Mr. Muir's) who were administering various parts of India during the first thirty years of the nineteenth century. English historians have, perhaps, been too much inclined to concentrate attention on the personality of successive Governors-General, and unduly to ignore the work done by their subordinates. Rarely has better work been done in India than by Sir

Thomas Munro, whose Indian career extended from 1780 to 1827; by Sir Charles (afterwards Lord) Metcalfe, who was resident at the court of the Nizam from 1820 to 1827, and later on was Governor of the North-West Provinces; and by Mountstuart Elphinstone, who was in India from 1796 to 1827, and ended his service as Governor of Bombay (1819 to 1827). Such men, who are only typical of many who have served the Company and the Crown in India during the last century and a half, acquire a knowledge of India and of the Indian peoples which no Governor-General, however great his ability and assiduous his study, can possibly obtain during his brief tenure of power. Still less can such knowledge be acquired by men who go out for a few years as expert members of Council. The latter have not infrequently attempted to apply with disastrous results the principles and precepts of a western doctrinaire under conditions which are widely diverse from those with which they are familiar. The work of Munro, Elphinstone, and Metcalfe was of a different order; it was based on wholly different principles. They made a close study of Indian conditions, social and economic, and attempted to improve them on 'native' lines, without any breach of continuity and tradition. But of this, more presently.

Lord William Bentinck, though a soldier, was like many soldiers essentially a man of peace, and with his name is associated no great war in India, nor any substantial extension of territory. Towards the close of his administration (1830) he was, indeed, compelled to take over the direct administration of Mysore, and in 1834 the little territory of Coorg was annexed in consequence of the flagrant and persistent tyranny of its Rajah, and, as Bentinck characteristically added, 'in consideration of the unanimous wish of the people'. Not, however, by such achievements is his rule in India remembered. Nor are these the things recorded in Macaulay's well-known inscription which adorns the statue of Bentinck in Calcutta.

Bentinck's rule was remarkable rather for a series of financial and social reforms carried through by the resolute

Bentinck's
Reforms.

determination of the Governor-General himself. The financial condition of the Company on his arrival was serious. But he rapidly evolved order out of the chaos bequeathed to him by Amherst: he reduced the allowances to the civil and military servants of the Company with an ultimate saving of one and a half millions a year; he issued regulations for a new settlement of the revenue of the North-West Provinces and regulated the cultivation of opium by a system of licensing; he entirely reorganized the system of provincial judicature, enlarged the jurisdiction of the native judges, and conferred a great boon upon suitors by permitting the use of the vernacular in courts of law. But it was his social reforms which afforded the supreme test of his courage.

Of all the problems which have confronted British administrators in India, undoubtedly the most difficult has been that of reconciling British ideals with the social and religious beliefs so deeply implanted in Indian minds. No ruler ever tackled such problems with greater courage than **Suttee**. Bentinck. In the year 1817 no fewer than seven hundred widows, many of them mere children, had, in Bengal alone, been immolated on the funeral pyres of their husbands. This cruel but immemorial custom of the Hindus, the Emperor Akbar had vainly attempted to abolish. To the Hindu, suttee was not merely a social convention, but a sacred duty dictated by his creed. In 1829 Bentinck, in spite of opposition from Europeans and natives alike, carried in Council an ordinance declaring all who abetted suttee guilty of culpable homicide. The effect of the ordinance was immediately perceptible. The cruel practice almost disappeared. Nor, so far as European eyes could see, were the gloomy anticipations of the opponents of abolition realized. But European eyes do not see everything in India. Hindu religion cuts deep. Still, Bentinck rejoiced that his Government should have the credit of an Act which was to wash out a foul stain upon British rule and to stay the sacrifice of humanity and justice to a doubtful expediency. In 1830 he rendered a further service to the

Government in India by the suppression of the Thugs, a caste of hereditary assassins, who had been wont to go about the country robbing and strangling peaceful travellers.

Before Bentinck's rule came to an end a very important change had been effected in the constitutional position of the Company. In 1833 the Charter of the Company was renewed for a further period of twenty years; but only on condition that the Company abandoned its commercial monopoly, and indeed ceased to carry on trade at all. Thus the old confusion between trade and government, a confusion deplored by Adam Smith as long ago as 1776, was at long last finally resolved. The Company ceased to be a merchant; it was henceforward only a sovereign. But its sovereignty was increasingly shared with Parliament and the Ministry of the day in England. This change was accompanied by an alteration in the style of the Governor-General, who, hitherto only 'Governor-General of Fort William in Bengal', was henceforward to be the 'Governor-General' not of the British territorial possessions in India, 'but of India in Council'. The Council itself was to consist of four ordinary members, three of whom were to be appointed from amongst such persons as had been servants of the Company for at least ten years; the fourth was to be legal member, and to be appointed from outside. Another article of the new Charter is so important that it must be quoted verbatim. It ran as follows: 'No native of the said territory or any natural born subject of His Majesty resident therein, shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the said Company.' No one could have been more anxious than Bentinck to give practical effect to this injunction, and he did all in his power to open offices in India to any properly qualified native.

The most significant and the most permanently influential of the reforms effected by him, were, however, those connected with education. As far back as 1825 Mountstuart

The
Charter
of 1833.

Educa-
tion.

Elphinstone had penned an important minute in which he insisted that the only path to social reform, and the only remedy for social abuses, such as those of suttee and infanticide, was education. Macaulay, who was the first legal member of Council under the revised Charter, was entirely in accord with the views of Elphinstone as to the paramount importance of education, but proceeded to organize it on lines of which that experienced servant would almost certainly have disapproved. It had long been a matter of dispute among British administrators whether English or Arabic or Sanskrit should be adopted as the medium of higher education. Macaulay with as little hesitation as knowledge decided dogmatically in favour of English. 'I have no knowledge of either Sanskrit or Arabic', he wrote in his minute of 1835, '... I am quite ready to take the Oriental learning at the valuation of the Orientalists themselves. I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia.' Thus did an English politician, a typical Whig of the doctrinaire school, only just arrived in India, acquainted with its history only through the medium of Burke's speeches and James Mill's erudite but distorted *History*, decide one of the most momentous questions which have occurred in the whole history of our Indian administration. Henceforward the English language, English literature, English political and natural science, were to form the basis of higher education in India. We have by no means, even now, exhausted the results of Macaulay's fateful decision. Yet whatever view we may take of Macaulay as an administrator, it is impossible to deny the facility of his pen or refuse assent to the noble tribute which he paid to the Governor-General under whom he served—the man who 'infused into Oriental despotism the spirit of British freedom; who never forgot that the end of government is the happiness of the governed; who abolished cruel rites; who effaced humiliating distinctions; who gave liberty to the expression of public opinion; whose constant study it was

to elevate the intellectual and moral character of the nations committed to his charge.' These words inscribed on Bentinck's statue in Calcutta did no more than justice to the elevated principles by which his policy was inspired. Nor can it be denied that he left India in a condition of profound repose—a repose which so far as alien observers can interpret Indian sentiment, appeared to be the fruit of social contentment.

IX

THE PROBLEM OF THE FRONTIER

The Afghan Question

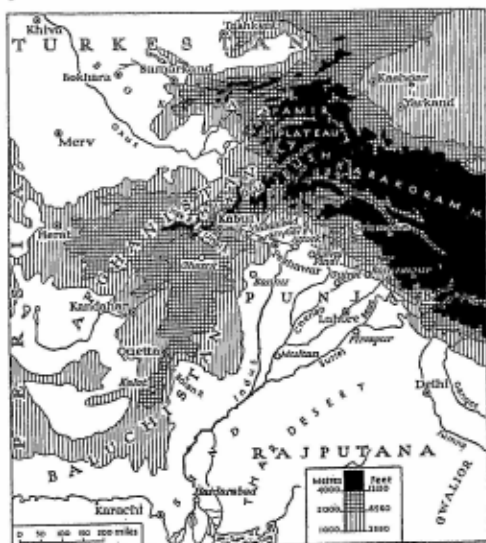
Lord REPOSE is a condition which is rarely prolonged in India. Nor did it, in the present case, survive the advent of Lord Auckland (1836). With his arrival there opens, indeed, a new Act in the drama of British India. His predecessors had established the paramountcy of the Company among the Indian Powers. They had not, save in the case of the Burmese War, looked beyond its frontiers. Lord Auckland, however, went out to India in complete sympathy with the views of the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, whose colleague he had been in the ministries of Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne. Palmerston was profoundly impressed by the danger threatened both to England and to India by the ambitious designs of Russia. From the days of Peter the Great to those of the Czarina Catherine, the primary object of Russia's policy was to establish herself firmly on the Black Sea. That object was attained by the Treaty of Kainardji (1774). From that time onwards Russia worked unceasingly to effect an egress from the Black Sea into the Eastern Mediterranean, and for this purpose to secure the control of the narrow straits. An appeal from the Ottoman Sultan for aid against his ambitious vassal Mehemet Ali gave the Czar Nicholas I of Russia a golden opportunity to realize his ambition. By the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, concluded between Russia and Turkey in 1833, Russia virtually converted the Black Sea into a Russian lake and Turkey-in-Europe into a Russian Protectorate. Practically mistress of Constantinople, she could henceforward dominate the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, opening them to her own ships, closing them to the ships of potential enemies. Nor were Russian ambitions limited to Europe. She had lately won a signal diplomatic victory over England at Teheran, and thwarted

an English scheme for the establishment of a new route by the Euphrates to India. Persia, therefore, had to be closely watched, both from London and from the Council Chamber at Calcutta. At the moment when Auckland arrived in India the Persians were threatening Herat, and behind the encroachments of the Persians, Auckland, primed by Palmerston, discerned the hand of Russia. The policy which he initiated in reference to the north-west frontier of India, however ill-judged in conception, however disastrous in its immediate consequences, must, then, in fairness be judged in the light of suspicions and apprehensions by no means unsubstantial.

The north-west frontier of British India rested at that time on the Sutlej: the Amirs of Sind guarded the mouths of the Indus, the Sikhs of the Punjab maintained their watch over the passes of the Himalayas. The Sikhs were still ruled by Ranjit Singh, who had faithfully observed the treaty concluded with him by Lord Minto in 1809. The great soldier-statesman, having subdued all the rival chieftains among the Sikhs, proceeded to extend the borders of his kingdom, by the acquisition of Attock and Multan, by the conquest of Kashmir, and finally, after a fierce contest with the Afghans, by the occupation of Peshawar, the key to the Khyber Pass. A strong power in the Punjab was beyond all question the best guarantee which could be given to British India against hostile incursions from the north-west. Unfortunately, however, the Punjab was at this moment threatened by Dost Muhammad, a brilliant Afghan adventurer, who had lately made himself master of the fierce tribes of Afghanistan, and was ruling them with an iron hand, as Amir of Kabul. The supreme ambition of Dost Muhammad was the recovery of Peshawar, at one time the eastern outpost of the Afghan empire, but lately, as we have seen, captured by the Sikhs. To deal with this danger, Lord Auckland dispatched Captain Alexander Burnes on a mission to Kabul. But the threat to Peshawar and to our faithful ally Ranjit Singh was not the only danger. The Persians

The
North-
West
Frontier.

were at the gates of Herat. Dost Muhammad cared very little about Herat, but a great deal about Peshawar. Let Persia help him to recover Peshawar, and they would be welcome to Herat. That was the policy urged upon the Afghan adventurer by Vicovitch, the Russian envoy, who



arrived at Kabul only two months after Burnes. Lord Auckland was greatly alarmed, and came to the precipitate decision to replace Dost Muhammad on the throne of Afghanistan by a puppet of his own. Shah Shujah, the deposed Amir of Afghanistan, was then living under British protection in India. Lord Auckland decided to re-establish him at Kabul. But no British force could reach Afghanistan from India except through the Punjab or through Sind. The Governor-General therefore invited the co-operation of Ranjit Singh. But the latter, while willing to co-operate in an attack on Dost Muhammad and thus

relieve the pressure upon Peshawar, prudently declined to allow the passage of a British army through the Punjab.

The only alternative was for the British forces to march through the territory held by the Amirs of Sind and penetrate Afghanistan through the Bolan Pass, while Ranjit Singh and his Sikhs marched through the Khyber. The Amir of Sind was more complaisant to the wishes, or less able to resist the pressure, of the Governor-General than Ranjit Singh. Accordingly, a great army, commanded by Sir John Keane, and with the Ex-Amir Shah Shuja in train, marched through the Bolan Pass, occupied Kandahar, took Ghazni by storm, and in August 1839 entered Kabul, without opposition but amid the sullen silence of the people. Dost Muhammad had fled from his capital; Shah Shuja was with great ceremony resealed on the throne.

First
Afghan
War,
1838-42.

The stupidity of Auckland's grandiose policy was quickly demonstrated. His armies should never have left India; for in October 1838 the Persians had retired from Herat, and thus the original irritant which had roused Palmerston and Auckland to their misplaced activity was removed. Moreover, in November 1839, a Russian expedition launched against Khiva was, after enormous losses of men and animals, overwhelmed in the snows of the Central Asian highlands. Fate was proving hardly less unkind to Auckland and Palmerston than to Russia and her Persian allies. But it reserved much its heaviest blows for the British and their catspaw in Kabul.

Shah Shuja was safe only so long as he was protected by British bayonets. In November 1840 Dost Muhammad surrendered, and was kept in honourable and comfortable captivity in Calcutta. Thereupon, most of the British troops were, with General Cotton, withdrawn from Afghanistan, though a garrison was left in Kabul under the command of General Elphinstone. Elphinstone was an elderly invalid who had been specially selected by Lord Auckland, against the advice of the Commander-in-chief, for an 'easy' post. Sir William Macnaghten, the chief political officer at Kabul, declared the

country to be in a state of tranquillity 'perfectly miraculous'. The 'miracle' permitted the wives and children of soldiers and politicals to join their men-folk.

The 'tranquillity' was wholly delusive. The fierce Afghan tribesmen refused to accept a ruler imposed upon them by infidels—Sikhs and Englishmen. Revolts broke out in all directions. Burnes, Macnaghten's lieutenant, was murdered in November; Macnaghten himself in December; and on 1 January 1842, Elphinstone, having surrendered most of his arms and munitions, signed a treaty for evacuation and placed his disarmed forces, the women and children, under the protection of Muhammad Akbar, the son of Dost Muhammad. Akbar undertook to conduct them to the frontier, but he was powerless, and questionably anxious, to restrain the wild tribesmen, who turned the retreat into a protracted and horrible massacre. Elphinstone, handed over with some of his officers as hostages to Akbar, mercifully died in his hands. The rest of the force, 4,500 in number, with 12,000 followers, was cut to pieces or perished, on the toilsome and dangerous retreat. On 13 January one solitary survivor, Dr. Brydon, reached Jalalabad. Jalalabad was held by a brigade under General Sir Robert Sale, with Captain George Broadfoot as garrison engineer. In April 1842 they were joined by General Pollock, who had marched to their relief through the Khyber. General Nott was holding Kandahar.

Lord
Ellen-
borough,
1842-4. In February 1842 Lord Ellenborough arrived at Calcutta as Governor-General in succession to Lord Auckland. Ellenborough was a colleague and disciple of Peel's, an accomplished orator, and an experienced administrator, but with more sense of melodramatic display than of true dignity. Faced on his arrival in Calcutta by an anxious, indeed critical situation, he at once ordered the withdrawal of all the British forces in Afghanistan. The generals at Kandahar and Jalalabad ignored the order, or hesitated to obey it. In April, Shah Shuja was murdered at Kabul, and in July Ellenborough so far reconsidered his decision as to order the withdrawal, 'if such a course were deemed

feasible by the Generals', to be made by way of Ghazni and Kabul. Responsibility was thus thrust upon the soldiers. They willingly accepted it, and joined forces at Kabul in September. The prisoners were rescued; condign punishment was inflicted upon the city; Afghanistan was evacuated; Dost Muhammad was sent back to Kabul, and retained the throne until his death, in advanced old age, in 1863.

Tragedy was followed by farcical burlesque. Lord Ellenborough celebrated the restoration of peace by splendid reviews at Ferozpur, and by the issue of a bombastic proclamation, condemning the blunders of his predecessor, and announcing the recovery of the famous 'Sandalwood' gates of the tomb of Mahmud of Ghazni, which Mahmud was supposed to have carried off from the temple of Somnath in 1024. General Nott was strictly enjoined to bring the gates back with him. He obeyed.

'Our victorious army' had thus recovered the gates 'which had so long been the memorial of the humiliation of the people of India, and had now become the proudest record of their national glory. . . . The despoiled tomb of Mahmud looks down on the ruins of Ghazni. The insult of 800 years is avenged.'

This silly bombast entirely failed of its intended effect. The Hindus had forgotten the historic insult; the Mohammedans resented the fresh insult offered to them; the 'Sandalwood' gates, which proved to be pine, were pronounced to be a 'fake', and were consigned to a lumber room at Agra.

Such was the appropriate conclusion—for the time being—of an episode pregnant with disaster and humiliation. The primary responsibility must rest on Lord Auckland and Lord Palmerston. The latter had anticipated the happiest results from this 'forward' policy.

'By taking the Afghans under our protection and in garrisoning if necessary Herat, we shall regain our ascendancy in Persia,' wrote Palmerston to Melbourne, . . . 'but British ascendancy in Persia gives security in the eastwards to Turkey, and tends to

make the Sultan more independent, and to place the Dardanelles more securely out of the grasp of Nicholas.'

Palmerston's view did not obtain universal acceptance. A youthful and alert opponent wanted to know:

'why it was necessary to create a barrier for our Indian Empire? When he looked at the geographical position of India he found an empire separated on the east and west from any Power of importance by more than 2,000 miles of neutral territory, bounded on the north by an impassable range of rocky mountains, and on the south by 10,000 miles of ocean. He wanted to know how a stronger barrier, a more efficient frontier could be secured than this which they possessed.' Yet this was the frontier which ministers had left behind them—'those fortunate gentlemen who proclaimed war without reason and prosecuted it without responsibilities.'

Disraeli's pertinent interrogation possesses an ironic significance. It pierced, with characteristic acumen, to the very heart of a problem as difficult as it was momentous. It also anticipated, with singular precision, questions addressed, under circumstances exactly parallel, nearly forty years afterwards, to Disraeli himself. Not often, it is said, does History exactly repeat itself; but to this generalization the history of British policy in Afghanistan offers a striking exception. In the late 'seventies the experience of the preceding generation was almost precisely reproduced, with Lord Beaconsfield substituted for Lord Palmerston, Lord Lytton for Lord Auckland, with the ill-fated Cavagnari in Macnaghten's part as victim, and Sir Frederick (afterwards Earl) Roberts as the *deus ex machina*—the brilliant soldier employed to redeem the errors of the politicians. Of this more presently.

To return to the 'forties. Lord Auckland's intervention in Afghanistan proved to be only the opening chapter of a long story. In one sense that is his best justification. His may not have been the wisest solution; it is, on the contrary, commonly held to have been a compound of folly and ignorance and arrogance. But the problem itself was real and was not of Auckland's nor indeed of any man's

making. Least of all can it be resolved by a layman, or even by an expert who is not possessed of first-hand knowledge of the conditions, both local and general. A layman can only state it baldly: What is the scientific frontier of India to the north-west? The question is both military and political, but it cannot be answered in these pages. Let it suffice to indicate the sequence of events.

Upon the first Afghan War there followed in the grim logic of history two others. The first was with the Amirs of Sind. Their independence had virtually disappeared with the passage of the British army through their territory in 1839. Throughout the troubles which ensued we had been obliged to maintain our line of communications by garrisoning the island of Bukkur, which commands the passage of the Indus, on the road to the Bolan Pass, and Karachi. When the Afghan War was over it seemed to Lord Ellenborough inconvenient to surrender these places. A pretext, albeit one of the shallowest and most cynical, was soon found. Treaties imposed upon the Amirs had unquestionably been indifferently respected. Further demands were made upon them, and in 1843 Major Outram, our political agent at Haidarabad, was attacked in the Residency. He held it gallantly with 100 men against 8,000, and safely withdrew his little garrison. Sir Charles Napier with 3,000 troops then flung himself upon an army of more than 20,000 Sindhis and Baluchis at Miani, and achieved one of the most brilliant victories in the history of British arms in India. Three days later (20 Feb. 1843) he entered Haidarabad, and another victory in the neighbourhood of the capital brought the brief but brilliant campaign to a conclusion. Its inevitable consequence was the annexation of Sind. 'No one', as Mr. Roberts truly says, 'has ever successfully defended on moral grounds British policy in regard to Sind.' Sir Charles Napier, the real author of that policy, cynically confessed: 'We have no right to seize Sind, yet we shall do so, and a very advantageous, useful, humane piece of rascality it will be.'¹ The territory of the

Annexation of
Sind,
1843.

¹ Roberts, *Historical Geography of India*, p. 330.

Amirs, though not extensive, was, indeed, of first-rate strategical importance. Its annexation gave us the command of the lower Indus valley and of the estuary of that river; it completed our circuit of the sea-coast of Hindustan, and it gave Napier the opportunity of substituting for a cruel and grasping Government the unappreciated blessings of order and prosperity.

Expedition to Gwalior, 1843. Before the year was out Ellenborough had begun, and successfully ended, an expedition against the Maratha State of Gwalior. Though, as we have seen, it had been left in the hands of Sindhia, Gwalior was under British protection. In consequence of the domestic broils incidental to a disputed succession the Resident found it necessary in 1843 to withdraw. An army under Sir Hugh Gough was, accordingly, dispatched to maintain order. The Marathas opposed him at Maharajpur, where he fought and won an important victory; General Grey won a victory on the same day at Panniar; and peace was promptly restored. The dominion of Sindhia remained intact, but Gwalior was placed under British protection; the Maratha army was reduced to 9,000 men; and a British force of 10,000 men, maintained at the expense of Gwalior, remained in occupation.

The Gwalior campaign dissipated the danger of a possible coalition between the Marathas and the Sikhs against the British Raj; it served also to bring Ellenborough's reign to an end. His feverish activity alarmed both the Directors and the Cabinet, who disapproved, though they did not repudiate, the annexation of Sind. In 1844 Ellenborough was, to his chagrin and astonishment, superseded by Sir Henry Hardinge.

The first Sikh War, 1845. Hardinge, though a veteran soldier, was sent out to India with a message of peace, and with definite instructions to pursue a policy of retrenchment. Before he had been a year in India he found himself, with the irony characteristic of British rule in India, involved in one of the most formidable wars of the century.

The Sikhs were not a distinct racial unit, but a religious

sect, the disciples of a prophet of the fifteenth century. On the break up of the Mogul Empire they, like the Marathas, emerged as a great territorial power. In the person of Ranjit Singh (1780-1839) they produced, as we have seen, a great statesman. But the power which he built up in the Punjab, though exceedingly formidable, was subject to the defect common to all Oriental Principalities. Its basis was purely personal. On his death confusion quickly ensued, and his capital, Lahore, became the theatre of perpetual quarrels, intrigues, and assassinations. The only organized power was that of the army, and the army was bent on trying conclusions with the English Company. Ever since the death of Ranjit Singh (June 1839) the British Government had been fully alive to the danger threatened by the unsettled state of the Punjab, and by the fixed ambition of the army, but they were determined to give the Sikhs no ground for offence. Hardinge, indeed, is accused by some critics of having gone so far in this direction as to have left the frontier inadequately guarded.

Among several competitors the Sikh army—the Praetorian Guard of the Punjab—acknowledged the claims of Duleep Singh, a reputed son of Ranjit; but he was a child, and the royal power, for what it was worth, was in the hands of the Rani and her paramour. Dreading the ascendancy of the army they incited it to attack the British.

In December 1845 the attack was delivered. On the 11th the Sikh army, 60,000 strong, with 150 guns, crossed the Sutlej near Firozpur. The next few weeks witnessed some of the heaviest fighting in the history of British India. Sir Hugh Gough hurried up with 10,000 men, and on 18 December inflicted a crushing defeat on the Sikhs at Mudki. Then, picking up the garrison under Sir John Littler at Firozpur, he attacked the fortified camp of the invaders at Firozshah (21, 22 Dec.). The Sikhs were far superior in numbers and guns, and fought with the utmost determination. But again Gough was victorious, though his victories were bought at a high price in wounded and killed,

Battles of
Mudki,
Firoz-
shah,
Aliwal,
and
Sobraon.

Sale and Broadfoot, the heroes of Jalalabad, being among the victims. But they were decisive. India was saved from invasion and the Sikhs were compelled to recross the Sutlej. Not, however, for long. In the first month of the new year (1846) they were back again, moving on Ludhiana. Sir Harry Smith was accordingly dispatched to support the little garrison with which Brigadier Godby held that post. Sir Harry relieved the garrison, and then, on 28 January, he inflicted a crushing defeat on the Sikhs at Aliwal. Meanwhile, Gough was watching the main body of the enemy, who had established themselves in a strongly fortified camp at Sobraon, guarding a bridge across the Sutlej. Sir Harry Smith rejoined the Commander-in-Chief on 10 February, and the two Generals, with their combined armies, carried the camp by storm, and drove the enemy with immense loss across the Sutlej. This was the crowning and conclusive victory of Sobraon. On the evening of the battle the advance on Lahore began. On 20 February the army was outside the walls of the capital, and Sir Henry Hardinge dictated the terms of a Peace which was concluded at Lahore on 9 March. The Sikhs agreed to cede the territory which lies between the Sutlej and the Beas rivers; to cut down their army to limits prescribed by us; to surrender all the guns used against us; to pay an indemnity and receive a British garrison for eight years. There was to be no annexation of the Punjab; Duleep Singh was recognized as Rajah, but the administration of the country was virtually committed to Major Henry Lawrence, who was to remain as British Resident at Lahore.

Sir Hugh Gough and Sir Henry Hardinge were rewarded with peerages, and in 1848 Hardinge handed over the reins to his successor with the comforting assurance that, so far as human foresight could discern, it would not be necessary to fire a gun in India for several years to come.

X

‘MAKING A PEOPLE’

The Rule of Dalhousie

NOWHERE is fate more apt to mock, nowhere do events more quickly falsify predictions, than in India. Within three months after Hardinge's departure a tragic outrage at Multan had reopened the whole question as to the future of the Punjab and had involved his successor in a war which led to the first of the annexations which made Lord Dalhousie's régime the most memorable in the history of British expansion in India. During the eight years of his rule the map of India was redrawn; as he left it, so it virtually remains.

Born in 1812, Lord Dalhousie was the youngest ruler ever entrusted with the government of India. But he was not without experience of administration. The friend and disciple of Sir Robert Peel he had been President of the Board of Trade since 1845, and in that capacity commended to the House of Lords—then literally a House of Landlords—the repeal of the Corn Laws. He went out to India in the belief that he would find there a fair field for those administrative reforms which lay nearest to his heart. An India, at last pacified, was evidently the reformer's opportunity. His belief was widely shared.

‘The youngest ruler who has assumed the responsibilities of this Empire, he receives it from his predecessor in a state of tranquillity which has hitherto no parallel in our Indian annals. He arrives at a time when the last obstacle to the complete and apparently the final pacification of India has been removed; when the only remaining army which could create alarm has been dissolved; and the peace of the country rests upon the firmest and most permanent basis.’ Thus did *The Friend of India* greet the new Governor-General. A brilliant historian has summarized Dalhousie's work in India under three heads: the extension

Lord Dal-
housie,
1848-56.

of our external frontier; the internal consolidation and unification of our territory, and the development of national resources—the transformation of 'the agricultural India of antiquity into the manufacturing and mercantile India of our own day'.¹

The conquest and annexation of the Punjab, 1848-9.

In extending the frontier Dalhousie was but completing the work begun by his immediate predecessors. When he assumed office the map of India was divided into two portions: one was under the immediate Government of the English Company; the other consisted of the Fendatory States in which we exercised a greater or less degree of control, but without direct responsibility. The device was at best only a convenient makeshift, and the results were in some cases deplorable. British arms often maintained upon their thrones vicious and tyrannical Sovereigns, who, but for our support, would long since have paid the common and appropriate penalty of Oriental despotism. British Residents, though powerful to avert external interference, were impotent to secure good administration at home. On the contrary, their presence defended the 'native' Prince from the consequences of his misrule. No ruler with an instinct for orderly administration could permit such a state of things to endure a day longer than was necessitated by the inadequacy of his own resources. Dalhousie's perception of this fact was largely responsible for the transformation of the map of India under his hand.

It was the Punjab which first demanded his attention. As generally happens—especially in India—'half-measures' had quickly demonstrated their futility. Lord Hardinge's policy had been one of 'experimental forbearance'. He had refused to annex the Province, and while rigorously curtailing its army had placed the country under a regency of Sikh chiefs controlled by a British Resident at Lahore. This policy was not to the liking either of Chiefs or people, and in April 1848 the prevailing discontent blazed out. Two young officers, Mr. Vans Agnew, a civilian, and Lieutenant Anderson, were sent to Multan to superintend a

¹ Hunter, *Dalhousie*, p. 11.

change in the Government of the district, and while executing their mission were brutally assassinated. Their dying appeal for help reached Lieutenant Herbert Edwardes, stationed eighty miles away upon the Indus. Edwardes collected what forces he could, and on 18 June and 1 July won two brilliant victories over Mulraj, the deposed Governor of Multan. But it had already become clear that the local outbreak at Multan was developing into a general insurrection of the Sikhs. The Punjab would either have to be abandoned or reconquered. Edwardes appealed for immediate assistance, but Lord Gough refused to take the field with an inadequate force during the hottest season of the year. His caution, though much criticized, approved itself both to the Governor-General and to the authorities at home. By November, however, he was ready to advance from Ferozpur with an army of 20,000 men; and on the 22nd a dearly-bought victory at Ramnagar enabled him to effect a crossing of the Chenab. It was an inauspicious beginning, and there was worse to come. On 13 January 1849 Gough was goaded into a rash and premature attack upon the Sikh position. Then ensued the battle of Chillianwala which a brilliant pen has described as 'an evening battle fought by a brave old man in a passion and mourned for by the whole British nation'.² The British loss in killed and wounded reached the terrible total of 2,338 men; four of our guns and three standards were captured by the Sikhs. It was not a defeat, but it needs some special pleading to claim it as a victory, and as soon as the news reached England there arose a loud clamour for the recall of Lord Gough. Sir Charles Napier was, accordingly, sent out to supersede him, but before Napier could reach India Gough won a brilliant victory at Gujrat (20 Feb.). Multan had surrendered a month earlier (22 Jan.), and after Gujrat General Gilbert chased the Sikhs and their Afghan allies across the plains of the Punjab. At Rawal Pindi the whole of the Sikh army surrendered (12 Mar.), and the Afghans

² Hunter, *Dalhousie*, p. 77. For an elaborate vindication of Gough, see Rait's *Life*, ii, pp. 211-45.

were hunted into the mountains. Thus was the second Sikh War brought to a triumphant termination, and the military power of the Sikh confederacy was for ever broken.

There could be but one sequel to the war. The half-measures of Lord Hardinge could not be repeated, and Lord Dalhousie, while 'deeply sensible of the responsibility', determined that the Punjab must be annexed to British India. In this step Hardinge himself generously and cordially concurred. The young Maharajah Duleep Singh received a pension of £50,000 a year, and the titular dignity of Prince. The administration of the newly conquered province was committed to a Board, consisting of the two Lawrences, Henry and John, Mr. Mansel, and later Mr. Montgomery, acting under the immediate direction of the Governor-General. The Sikh army was disbanded; the Sikh confederacy was broken up; and the whole of the vast territory it had ruled was in a few years reduced to order and subordination by the genius of the Lawrences. How completely they gained the respect, if not the affection, of the Sikhs, the tale of the Mutiny was soon to prove, while no words can exaggerate the importance of the bulwark they thus erected on the most vulnerable frontier of British India. Even the Directors in Leadenhall Street were moved to express their admiration for the work of the Lawrences and their colleagues—men who had 'entitled themselves to be placed in the foremost rank of Indian administrators'. Nothing, indeed, could improve upon the summary contained in the Directors' Dispatch of 26 October 1853:

'In the short space which has elapsed since the Punjab became a part of the British dominions results have been achieved such as could scarcely have been hoped for as the result of many years of well-directed exertions. The formidable army has been quietly disbanded, and the turbulent soldiery have settled to industrious pursuits. Peace and security reign throughout the country. . . . Justice has been made accessible . . . to the whole population. Industry and commerce have been

set free. A great mass of oppressive and burdensome taxation has been abolished, money rents have been substituted for payments in kind. . . . Cultivation has already largely increased,' and 'notwithstanding the great sacrifice of revenue, a large surplus is assured.'

Lord Dalhousie's second annexation was the 'sub-The second Burmese War, 1852-3.montane tract' of Sikkim in the Himalayas, due north of Bengal. Relatively small in extent, this annexation gave us an important tea-growing district and brought us into direct relations with Thibet. Much more important was the annexation of Pegu, a large tract of lower Burma. This was the fruit of the second Burmese War, which gave us the control of the whole of the eastern coast of the Bay of Bengal from Chittagong to Tenasserim.

More important still were the annexations in Central India rendered possible by a rigorous application of the The doctrine of 'Lapse'. doctrine of 'Lapse'. When a Hindu had no lineal heirs it had long been the custom for him to 'adopt' an heir and bequeath to him not merely his private possessions, but his principality as well. With the rights of 'adopted' heirs to private inheritances Dalhousie had no wish to interfere; but he held that the interests of good government required that no rights of political succession should accrue without the sanction of the Paramount Power. This principle Dalhousie fearlessly applied. In deference to the doctrine of 'Lapse' the Maratha principality of Satara was annexed in 1849, and Jhansi and Nagpur in 1853. The last added to British India the great district known as the Central Provinces. The same doctrine is responsible for the less important annexations of Jaitpur, Baghat, Udaipur, and Budawal. That these annexations were made with the most scrupulous conscientiousness on the part of the Governor-General, and that the result of them was to substitute good government for bad government is undeniable. But it is not less certain that in the aggregate they tended to create a feeling of unrest among the peoples of India which was among the contributory causes of the subsequent Mutiny.

The annexation
of Oudh.

Most significant of all in this respect, and most direct in its bearing upon the Mutiny, was the annexation of the Mohammedan kingdom of Oudh. In no district of India was the government more notoriously and more heartlessly oppressive. The misrule had, as we have seen, been persistent for half a century. Lord Wellesley had foreseen, as long ago as 1801, that the Paramount Power would be compelled to interfere. Thirty years later Lord William Bentinck, least ambitious but most humane of rulers, had solemnly warned the King that failure to amend his ways could have but one result. Lord Hardinge in 1847 definitely limited the period of grace to two years. In 1856 Dalhousie determined to act. It was his solemn conviction that 'the British Government would be guilty in the sight of God and man if it were any longer to aid in sustaining by its countenance an administration fraught with suffering to millions'. But for that countenance the Kings would long since have paid the penalty for persistent oppression and misrule, and Dalhousie felt that the responsibility thus incurred by the British Government was too heavy to be borne any longer. Nevertheless, he shrank from the final and formal step. That the actual administration should be vested in the Company seemed to him inevitable, but he would have left the King his title, rank, and ample revenues. The Directors decreed otherwise, and on 13 February 1856 the formal annexation of Oudh to the dominions of the Company was proclaimed. On the fallen rulers no compassion need be wasted. They had been repeatedly warned, but despite warnings had persisted in their evil ways. As for their subjects, no one can doubt that in place of a bad government they got a good one. But it is none the less true and significant that in 1857 Oudh supplied a large proportion of the mutineers.

Internal
reforms.

The annexation of Oudh was the last official act of Lord Dalhousie. But to dwell exclusively upon the change he effected in the map of British India would be to present his administration in false perspective. That change was indeed stupendous. The British India of 1856 was 'be-

tween a third and a half' larger than that of 1848. More than that, its 'political centre of gravity had profoundly altered'.¹ Realizing this fact and all that it implied, Dalhousie promoted a series of consequential changes. Lower Bengal was placed under a Lieutenant-Governor, and the Governor-General was set free for his wider responsibilities. The centre of military gravity was shifted steadily towards the north-west. The seat of the supreme Government was transferred, during the greater part of the year, to the Himalayan summer resort of Simla, and thither, in 1865, the armyhead-quarters followed it. To bind together the old British India and the new, Dalhousie devised a comprehensive scheme of railway construction, basing it financially upon the system which he would fain have applied to England in 1844. Individuals were to find the capital, and the State was to guarantee a minimum rate of interest.² It was indeed much less upon his territorial annexations than upon administrative and economic reforms that Lord Dalhousie himself laid stress in reviewing his work in India. There was not a department of government, not a sphere of activity, in which he did not take a personal interest, and on which he did not leave the permanent impress of his own personality. He reformed the prison system; he established cheap postage; he laid down 4,000 miles of electric telegraph; he encouraged and improved the cultivation of cotton, flax, and tea; he busied himself with the preservation and renewal of forests; he improved the breed of horses and sheep; he constructed canals, improved river navigation and instituted irrigation works on a large scale; improved harbours, constructed bridges and roads, and reorganized the Public Works Department. Nor were his social reforms less significant than his material improvements. He did much to suppress 'certain noted evils which [had] long been just causes of

¹ Hunter, *Dalhousie*, p. 179.

² Hunter describes Dalhousie's railway scheme set forth in the Minute of 1853 as 'one of the most comprehensive and far-seeing which ever issued from a human brain', *op. cit.*, p. 191.

national reproach—suttee, thuggee, female infanticide,' and the 'horrible rite, which consisted in the sacrifice, with every circumstance of atrocity, of young human victims for the propitiation of the special divinity which presided over the fertility of the earth', a rite known as the Meria Sacrifice.

But of all his administrative activities it was those which he dedicated to the improvement of education on which Lord Dalhousie—like a true Scot—laid special stress. The credit of his achievements must indeed be shared with Mr. Thomason, and with Sir Charles Wood, then President of the Board of Control, whose great education dispatch of 19 July 1854 contained, as Dalhousie himself said, 'a scheme of education for all India, far wider and more comprehensive than the local or the supreme Governments could ever have ventured to suggest. It left nothing to be desired, if indeed' (the reservation is significant) 'it did not authorize and direct that more should be done than is within our present grasp'.

Of the scope and significance of the work accomplished in this sphere by Dalhousie no one could judge better than Sir William Hunter, who in his *Life of Dalhousie* writes:

'A vast network of educational institutions has, under the system thus initiated, been spread over India. These institutions start from the indigenous hedgeschools of the Hindus and the old Mosque schools of the Musalmans, which have now been brought within Government inspection. They advance, by well-ordered upward steps, to the Vernacular and Anglo-vernacular schools, the High Schools, the affiliated Colleges, and the Universities. The whole forms a complete gradation of Public Instruction under the direction and control of the State. . . . It has set in motion new forces, intellectual and political, whose magnitude it is impossible to gauge, but which the British Government now finds itself compelled to reckon with. Amid all the checks which occurred to Dalhousie's consolidating system in India, after his firm hand was withdrawn, this tremendous factor of unification has gone on working without break or intermission, gaining strength, and displaying its marvellous results on an ever-extending scale. Even the

Mutiny did not interrupt the progress of Indian education. The year 1857, which saw us forced to fight for our existence, also saw the Acts passed to establish the three Indian Universities, since increased to five [now 15], which form the cornerstone of Public Instruction in India. Every Viceroy, whatever his public policy or private idiosyncrasies, has sought to connect his name with the magnificent system of Indian State education introduced during Lord Dalhousie's rule.'

So Hunter wrote in 1890. Whether he would have used the same language had he been reviewing Dalhousie's work from the standpoint of 1931 cannot be known. But as to the general tendency of Dalhousie's work there can be no two opinions. It made for the extension of British India, for its territorial consolidation, but above all for its political, material, and moral unification. The full effects of the changes initiated by Dalhousie we are not even yet, perhaps, able accurately to gauge. But we can perceive clearly enough their general direction. 'We are making a people in India where hitherto there have been a hundred tribes but no people.' So wrote Sir Edwin Arnold in his study of Lord Dalhousie's administration in 1865. The words were not merely an accurate summary of Dalhousie's work in the past, they were a singularly prescient anticipation of its future consequences.

That Dalhousie foresaw the ultimate consequences it would be ridiculous to suppose. He was not blind, as the next chapter will show, to the proximate risks.

He left India, a sick man, in February 1856. He never recovered from the excessive strain imposed on mind and body by his eight years' work in India, and died in 1860 at the age of forty-eight. In strength of will and imperiousness of temper, Dalhousie closely resembled Lord Wellesley; in passion for work, in attention to detail, and in zeal for administrative reform, he had no equal among the rulers of India except Lord Curzon; in the combination of qualities he was unique.



XI

THE MUTINY

LORD DALHOUSIE left India at peace; but he was under no illusion either as to the possible duration or as to the conditions of tranquillity. 'No prudent man having any knowledge of Eastern affairs, would ever venture to predict a prolonged continuance of peace in India.' Those were his parting words to the Indian people. To his employers he addressed a strong protest against the withdrawal of European regiments from India, and seriously warned them against the danger involved in the increasing disproportion between English and native troops. 'We are perfectly secure', he wrote, 'so long as we are strong and are believed to be so.'

Were we believed to be strong? Between 1855 and 1859 reports were industriously circulated in India that British arms had met with reverses in the Crimea. The Indian natives were told, and with truth, that Russia single-handed was defying the combined attacks of England and France, not to mention the Ottoman Turks and the Italians. Was England, then, decadent; was Russia the coming Power? When, in February 1856, Lord Canning took over the reins of government from Dalhousie these questions were being eagerly asked in India; if they were answered it was *sotto voce*.

The new Governor-General was the third son of the great statesman who had actually accepted the office of Governor-General in 1822, and but for the sudden death of Lord Castlereagh would have filled it. It is idle, though interesting, to speculate what India lost by Castlereagh's suicide. Lord Canning, like his predecessor, had served his political apprenticeship under Peel, and from 1853 to 1855 had been Postmaster-General in the Coalition Ministry headed by Lord Aberdeen. The memory of his rule in India is associated exclusively with the outbreak and suppression of the Mutiny.

A detailed study of the course of the Mutiny lies outside the scope of the present work. The story has been told by a score of pens, and need not be retold. It is, however, important to scrutinize the causes of the outbreak, and to examine its results.

Causes of the Mutiny. The immediate occasion of the Mutiny is not in dispute. It was unquestionably due to the issue to certain regiments of a new type of cartridge greased with the fat of cows and swine. Much less easy is it to determine the precise nature and scope of the rising. By some historians it is still described as a purely military revolt; others discern in it an attempt to bring about a political revolution. A military revolt it evidently was; nor was it the first, though it was by far the most serious, of the kind. Mutinies among the native troops had been not infrequent. Vellore was, as already mentioned, the scene of a serious outbreak in 1806; a less serious one broke out at Lahore in 1849, and many others had been hushed up by the authorities. One of the most eminent historians of the Mutiny goes so far as to say that 'for thirty years past the Bengal army had been in a state of quasi-mutiny'.¹

These facts, though not revealed to the English people, whose interest in Indian affairs has never been continuously sustained, were not hidden from the Princes or people of India. Nothing that happens in India ever is, or indeed ever was, even before the establishment of an official post-office, or the setting up of electric telegraph wires. How news was disseminated from one end to another of a vast sub-continent remains one of the many mysteries of Indian history. The fact is unquestionable.

That there was discontent among the native troops was, then, well known to Indians. Equally notorious was the withdrawal from India of European troops—a withdrawal necessitated, so exaggerated rumour said, by the reverses to English arms in the Crimea. In 1857 the native troops outnumbered the British by six or seven to one. Of the native army estimated at about 310,000 men, nearly half

¹ Holmes, *The Indian Mutiny*, p. 63.

belonged to the Bengal army, comprising some 128,000 Indians and 23,000 Europeans. A large proportion of the Indians had been recruited in Oudh, and that Province was, as subsequent events were to prove, particularly disaffected. But a sense of unsettlement prevailed widely and was due to a variety of causes. The Burmese wars, involving the transportation of troops across the black water; the issue of the Foreign Enlistment Order (1856); the attempt to impose European discipline, moral as well as military, upon Indian troops; the diminution in the prestige of the regimental officers; all these things contributed to the restlessness of the troops. Nevertheless it was the considered and deliberate opinion of the highest authority on the military aspect of the question that there would have been no mutiny had the warnings of Dalhousie received the attention they deserved; had a prudent proportion between British and native troops been maintained; above all, had the British officers themselves been younger, more alert to detect signs of disaffection, and more prompt in dealing with it when it became manifest.

'Brigadiers of seventy,' wrote Lord Roberts, 'Colonels of sixty, and Captains of fifty. It is curious to note how nearly every military officer who held a command or a high position on the staff in Bengal when the Mutiny broke out, disappeared from the scene in the first few weeks and was never heard of officially again.'

As far as it goes the opinion of Lord Roberts must be accepted as conclusive; but it is based on the assumption that the Mutiny was entirely military in origin. As a fact it is very doubtful whether military disaffection would by itself have produced so serious a revolt. The matter, then, must be probed further.

That political causes contributed to sustain a revolt, which in its earlier manifestations was purely military is not open to doubt. Among these the annexations carried out by Lord Dalhousie must have a foremost place. Those annexations had not discriminated between peoples and

¹ *Forty-one Years in India*, i. 456-7.

creeds. The Sikhs of the Punjab, the great Mohammedan kingdom of Oudh, Nagpur—one of the five great States of the Hindu Confederacy of the Marathas—all had been swept into the net. For each annexation excellent reasons were advanced. In every case a vicious and oppressive rule had been replaced by an administration based on principles of justice, impartiality, and social order. These 'blessings' had not evoked a vestige of gratitude among the recipients. 'Good government' is indeed much less appreciated than Englishmen like to believe. Oriental conservatism is averse from change, even if it be demonstrably a change for the better. This is a truism which the British mind has always found it difficult to grasp; often with lamentable results, never with results more lamentable than in the case of the Indian Mutiny.

One illustration may be cited of a general truth. Among the 'blessings' conferred by British administrators upon the peoples of the annexed provinces not the least was a land settlement, designed to relieve the cultivating peasants from the oppressive burdens imposed on them by a class of men who, whether as 'landlords' or hereditary tax collectors, had extorted the last penny from the peasants and were steadily impoverishing the soil. But peasants do not always appreciate the advantage of reduced rents regularly collected, perhaps by alien collectors, even when compared with the much heavier exactions of more familiar extortioners. Still less does reform conciliate the goodwill of the extortioners. The habits of all classes were therefore disturbed; the interests of all were touched; some were injured in pocket; others, though materially benefited, were socially offended; the resulting resentment was increased.

A more subtle reason for prevailing unrest remains to be analysed. Ancient customs which to the occidental are 'horrible rites' were to the Hindu religious observances, sanctified by immemorial tradition and enjoined by unquestioned authority. Were Englishmen to tolerate suttee, infanticide, human sacrifices, lest they should offend the

religious susceptibilities of those for whose well-being they had become responsible? The question suffices to indicate the dilemma—a dilemma not peculiar to relations between Englishmen and Indians. It does not solve the practical problem of administration.

Apart, however, from the suppression of rites and customs so palpably indefensible in the abstract, there had lately been aroused suspicions of an attempt to undermine the faith both of Hindus and Mohammedans. On the whole, English administrators in India have been scrupulously careful to avoid even the appearance of proselytizing intentions, and have been singularly successful in doing so. But to this general rule there have, of course, been particular exceptions. Shortly before the arrival of Lord Canning the missionaries had issued an ill-advised manifesto pointing out the increased facilities for missionary work afforded by the development of the railway system. The natives leapt to the conclusion that religious proselytism was the real motive behind Dalhousie's transport policy! Taking advantage of the fears inspired by the General Enlistment Order, agitators spread a rumour that Lord Canning had been specially charged with the task of converting the whole country to Christianity; his Order, a subtle attack upon Caste, was the first step towards the accomplishment of his task! And so on. Over-active imaginations supplied deficiencies of evidence. For the idea that there was a deep-laid plot for the conversion of the 'heathen' there was not the slightest foundation, but suspicions once entertained are not easily removed.

Personal grievances impelled influential individuals towards insurrection. India was at this moment full of men who were nursing grievances, by no means wholly imaginary, against the British Government: dispossessed princes, disappointed 'heirs', greedy placemen deprived of comfortable jobs. Among these personal influences the most potent was that of the Nana Sahib, the adopted heir of Baji Rao the last of the Peshwas. The Peshwa died in 1851, and Dalhousie refused to renew to his adopted heir

the pension with which since 1818 the Peshwa had been consoled. Second only to the Nana in malignant influence was Azimula Khan, a Mohammedan agent employed by the Nana to promote his suit in Europe.

The greased cartridges. Upon materials thus highly inflammable a live spark was unfortunately dropped. A new weapon, the Enfield rifle, had lately been substituted, in the Indian army, for the old 'Brown Bess'. It was rumoured that the new cartridges were greased with the fat of swine and cows. To load the new rifle the sepoy would have to bite the cartridge. This meant for the Hindu desecration, and for the Mohammedan contamination; to the former the cow is sacred, to the latter the pig is pollution. The worst fears of both were apparently justified. The caste of the one was to be undermined, the creed of the other was derided. Both refused to touch the greased cartridges. Their officers, well knowing their sentiments, assured them that the rumour was baseless, and that they might safely use the new cartridges. The assurance did but inflame their terror and resentment. They felt themselves the victims of an accursed conspiracy, designed to effect their degradation in this world and their damnation in the next. For the sepoys were better informed than their officers. The story of the greased cartridges was true. With incredible folly and carelessness the fat of swine and cows *had* been used in glazing the paper which contained the powder. The officers never suspected it; the men learnt it from the low-caste natives employed in the arsenal. The consequences of the initial blunder, and still worse the subsequent denial of the facts, can easily be imagined. The outbreak of mutiny was due in part to sheer terror; in part to justifiable resentment against the fraud which, as the sepoys imagined, had been practised upon them by those in authority.

Outbreak of mutiny. Manifestations of unrest became increasingly frequent in the early months of 1857. On 24 January General Hearsey reported from Dum Dum the existence of an 'unpleasant feeling' which he ascribed to rumours as to the preparation of the new cartridges. The 19th Native

Infantry was stationed at Berhampur, a military station about one hundred miles from Calcutta; the 34th was at Barrackpur. These regiments were honeycombed with disaffection, and so quickly did the mutinous temper spread that it was thought desirable to disband the 10th on 30 March, and the 34th on 6 May.

The first serious outbreak occurred at Meerut. Eighty-five troopers of the 3rd Native Cavalry having been tried by a court martial composed of native officers for refusing to touch their cartridges, were sentenced to ten years' imprisonment, were publicly degraded, and marched off to jail. On the following day, Sunday, 10 May, the whole regiment mutinied, broke open the jail, released their comrades and 1,200 other prisoners, gutted and burnt the European bungalows, and massacred every European, man, woman, and child, on the outskirts of the cantonments. The mutineers then made off to Delhi. General Hewitt—one of Lord Roberts's 'Generals of Seventy'—was in command at Meerut, and neither he nor Archdale Wilson, the Brigadier, made any effort to pursue the mutineers or to warn the garrison at Delhi. Lord Roberts held that 'there was unaccountable, if not culpable, want of energy displayed by the Meerut authorities on this disastrous occasion': but that it would have been futile to pursue the mutineers, even had their destination been ascertained, and that no action however prompt on the part of the Meerut authorities could, at this stage, have arrested the mutiny.² The Government of India, however, took a serious view of the conduct of affairs at Meerut, and General Hewitt was removed from his command.

Meerut is forty miles to the north of Delhi. On the morning of 11 May the mutineers reached unopposed the ancient capital of India. Their arrival was evidently expected; there was not a single British regiment in Delhi; the native regiments joined the mutineers; the inhabitants of the great city were unmistakably on their side. The rebels having murdered all the British officers of sepoy

² Vol. i, pp. 87-91.

regiments and every European in the city, proceeded to drag forth from his retirement the old Mogul Emperor, and proclaim the restoration of the Mohammedan dynasty to the imperial throne of India. A military revolt was quickly developing into a political revolution.

Delhi became its centre. The fate of British India depended on the speedy recapture of that great city. Towards this end all energies were bent. General Anson, the Commander-in-Chief, was at Simla when the bad news reached him on 12 May. He collected what forces he could at Umballa, but found them insufficient for the task of retaking Delhi, and unequipped either with means of transport or with siege guns. He proposed, therefore, to wait until he could march with fair prospect of success. But time was of the essence of the situation. Lord Canning urged the General to immediate action. Sir John Lawrence wrote from the Punjab in the same sense. He admitted that, on military principles, the General's plea for delay was unanswerable. But political considerations should be paramount. 'Pray only reflect', he wrote, 'on the whole history of India. Where have we failed when we acted vigorously? Where have we succeeded when guided by timid counsels?' Anson yielded, arranged that two brigades should march from Umballa, and, having united with one from Meerut, should try to carry out their orders and 'make short work with Delhi'. Anson himself started on 24 May, but succumbed to cholera at Kurnal on the 26th, and the command of the field force then devolved upon Sir Henry Barnard.

The Punjab. Meanwhile, in the Punjab, Sir John Lawrence was straining every nerve for the fulfilment of a two-fold task: to secure the Punjab itself, and to provide a force to assist in the recapture of Delhi. Lawrence himself was a tower of strength, and was splendidly served by his lieutenants Herbert Edwardes, John Nicholson, and Robert Montgomery. There was no panic, but at the same time no misplaced reliance upon the loyalty of native troops. Those troops were not less mutinous in the Punjab than elsewhere.

But prompt action rendered them impotent for mischief. The great arsenal at Ferozpur was secured, and many of the native regiments were disarmed at Mian Mir, Multan, and Peshawar. These measures—exhibiting a combination of calm courage and stern repression—deeply impressed the Sikh population as well as those sepoys who were permitted to retain their arms. Thus did Lawrence and his lieutenants save the Punjab, and in saving the Punjab succoured India. On 22 June Nicholson was dispatched in command of a strong force to Delhi, and on 14 August he arrived before the town.

By that time the siege, if siege it may be called, had already been in progress for two months. Barnard, succeeding to the command on 26 May, was joined on 7 June by a brigade from Meerut, and with this, and 500 Gurkhas and a siege-train, he marched on Delhi. His total force was now about 3,800 strong. On 8 June he met the mutineers 8,000 strong, six miles outside the town, drove them within the walls, and himself took up his position on the famous ridge to the north of the city. By the end of June the rebel army had swollen to 30,000; the British force, therefore, had its work cut out even to defend the ridge. Barnard succumbed to cholera on 5 July, and on the 17th General Reed, who had succeeded to the command, was compelled through illness to give way in turn to Archdale Wilson. By the end of August the little force on the ridge had been increased to 8,000 men fit for service, besides 3,000 men in hospital. No reinforcements could be looked for from the south, and Lawrence told Wilson that he had sent the last man he could spare from the Punjab. It was decided, therefore, to deliver an assault without delay. The breaching batteries opened fire on 11 September, and in the early dawn of 14 September the assault was delivered. The Kashmir gate was blown in and two other breaches were effected. Immediately the ramparts were stormed and taken, but for six days the British troops had to fight every inch of ground within the city. Nicholson, who had led the assault with splendid gallantry, was mortally wounded, but

The
Siege of
Delhi.

still the troops fought on. The magazine was taken after two days' hard fighting on the 16th, and the imperial palace on the 21st. The old Mogul Emperor who thus fell into our hands was ultimately sent as a State prisoner to Rangoon, where he died in 1862 at the age of eighty-seven. His two sons and a grandson, who had surrendered themselves, were shot down without trial or any forms of arraignment by Hodson, the intrepid leader of the irregular horse. Delhi was ours.

Cawnpore. With the recapture of Delhi—the scene of the essentially vital struggle¹—the curtain falls upon the first act of the drama of the Mutiny. There were two other theatres of revolt where grim tragedies were enacted. Most grim was that at Cawnpore. Cawnpore is on the great trunk road between Delhi and Calcutta, 270 miles from the former and 684 from the latter. It contained a great native garrison, commanded in 1857 by Sir Hugh Wheeler, another aged officer. Early in May, Wheeler, anticipating mutiny, hastily fortified some buildings, and the British residents took refuge within the rough entrenchments. Near to Cawnpore is Bithur where the Nana Sahib lived in state. The native troops mutinied on 6 June, fled from Cawnpore to Bithur, and the Nana, putting himself at their head, was proclaimed Peshwa. The troops demanded to be led to Delhi, but the Nana persuaded them first to exterminate the vermin in Cawnpore. Within the entrenchments were 870 non-combatants, and to defend them Wheeler had only 240 European soldiers and six guns. Without were 4,000 rebels led by the treacherous Nana. Unspeakable were the sufferings of the little garrison, huddled together under the burning June sun; with scant provisions, little water, and constantly exposed to the enemy's fire. For three weeks they held the enemy at bay, but on 24 June they surrendered on the sworn promise of the Nana that he would guarantee them safe escort by the Ganges to Allahabad. On the 27th they marched out, a miserable company of 450, fever-stricken, wounded, and starving.

¹ McLeod Innes, *Lucknow and Oude in the Mutiny*, p. 25.

Just as they were embarking the full measure of the Nana's treachery was revealed. A murderous fire was opened upon them; the men were shot down or hacked to pieces before the eyes of their wives and children; four only, the survivors of the single boat-load which actually got afloat, managed to escape; the women and children, some 150 in number, were dragged back and thrust into captivity in Cawnpore. On 20 June, General Havelock, who had but just returned from an expedition to Persia, was appointed to the command of a movable column to be formed at Allahabad for the relief of Cawnpore and Lucknow. Havelock, a fine soldier who had grown grey in the service, was one of the most remarkable characters in the great drama of the Mutiny. A scientific student of war, an intrepid leader, he was a deeply religious man with a faith in Providence as firm as Cromwell's. Now at last the chance for which he had long waited and assiduously trained himself had come. He was to command a British army in the field. He hastily collected a force of 1,000 men at Allahabad, advanced and defeated the rebels at Fathpur on 12 July, and three days later inflicted upon them a second crushing defeat at Aoung. On that same day the Nana had every woman and child at Cawnpore butchered in cold blood, and flung dead or dying into a well. With a force of 6,000 men the Nana then tried to stop the advance of Havelock. Once more, but too late to save the wretched captives, Havelock routed the rebels, and on 17 July the English were again masters of Cawnpore. Havelock blew up the palace and magazines at Bithur, and leaving Neill to occupy Cawnpore, he started on 25 July for the relief of Lucknow.

Next to Delhi, Lucknow was the most important centre of the Mutiny. It was indeed natural that the capital of Oudh should be the focus of unrest. In March, Sir Henry Lawrence had been appointed Resident. He clearly foresaw the coming storm, and did all he could to put Lucknow in a condition of defence, but the task was not easy. He had 700 British soldiers under his command, and 16,000 native troops. On 30 May the storm burst; five of the

native regiments mutinied, set fire to the cantonments, and murdered their officers, under circumstances of exceptional treachery. The outbreak at Lucknow gave the signal for revolt to every station throughout the old kingdom of Oudh. By the middle of June every regiment in the province was in a state of mutiny. As soon as Cawnpore surrendered, the mutineers moved on Lucknow. On 30 June, Lawrence with a little force marched out to meet more than 6,000 rebels at Chinhut, a few miles outside the city. His native gunners cut the traces of their horses, threw the guns into a ditch, and Lawrence was compelled to retreat with heavy loss. He could no longer hold the city, and on 1 July he withdrew his little garrison into the Residency. Within the Residency were now confined 927 Englishmen, soldiers and civilians, 765 native troops, and 130 women and children. On 2 July the Residency was invested, and two days later the garrison suffered an irreparable loss—Lawrence being killed by a bursting shell. The command devolved on Brigadier Inglis, and for eighty-seven days he sustained the siege with unflinching courage and marvellous resource. Again and again the rebels assaulted the Residency; again and again the assaults were repelled. All through the burning summer the sufferings of the besieged were intense: cholera, small-pox, and fever wrought deadly havoc upon a garrison confined within a narrow space and weakened by lack of food and ceaseless toil. Again and again the garrison learnt that relief was at hand only to be disappointed; but at last on 24 September the news reached them that Havelock had arrived. Since 12 July he had fought, at terrible odds, no fewer than twelve pitched battles. Ever since the recapture of Cawnpore, Havelock had been trying with his miserably inadequate force to cut his way through the rebels to Lucknow. So far, however, he had failed. Immediately on arriving in India, Sir Colin Campbell, the new Commander-in-Chief, promised him reinforcements, but at the same time announced, to Havelock's disappointment,¹ that the command would be given

Havelock
and Out-
ram.

¹ General Sir George MacMunn contends that this episode has

to Sir James Outram. On 15 September Outram joined Havelock at Cawnpore, but with a chivalry rare even in the annals of the most chivalrous service in the world, he refused to supersede his comrade until the work for which he had so long and so splendidly laboured, should have been accomplished. 'The Major-General (Outram) in gratitude for, and admiration of the brilliant deeds in arms achieved by General Havelock and his gallant troops, will cheerfully waive his rank on the occasion, and will accompany the force to Lucknow in his civil capacity as Chief Commissioner of Oudh, tendering his military services to General Havelock as a volunteer.' So ran the general order of 16 September. Three days later Havelock recommenced his march at the head of 3,000 men. Still miserably deficient in strength, but splendidly handled, the little force won their way through, and after two days' continuous fighting on the outskirts of the city, Havelock joined hands with Inglis—25 September. But the relief had cost him 700 men, including General Neill; he was not strong enough to bring out the garrison with safety, and in his turn, therefore, Havelock found himself besieged in the Residency.

When Sir Colin Campbell reached India in August to take over the supreme command the prospects for his countrymen looked black indeed. Delhi was untaken; Lucknow unrelieved; Cawnpore doubtfully held by Havelock. For two months Campbell was busily employed in collecting men and transports and sending them to the front; he left Calcutta himself on 27 October, and reached Cawnpore on 3 November. On the 9th he set out for the relief of Lucknow. He attacked the city with 5,000 men on the 14th, and after a series of difficult but brilliant actions, he joined hands with Outram and Havelock on the 17th. By the 22nd Campbell had withdrawn the garrison in

generally been misunderstood; that Havelock could not have been 'chagrined' at being 'superseded' by his superior (see *The Indian Mutiny in Perspective* (London, 1931), pp. 132, 191, &c.). Unfortunately Sir George's work appeared too late for me to consult it before writing this chapter.

The re-conquest of India.

safety, but the lustre of a great military achievement was dimmed by the death in the Palace of the Alambagh of the gallant Havelock (24 Nov.). Leaving Outram to hold that strongly fortified post, Campbell then hurried back to Cawnpore. He was only just in time to avert disaster. During his absence a large body of mutineers from the Maratha State of Gwalior had joined hands with the forces led by two of the most formidable opponents we ever had to encounter in the Mutiny war. The one was Tantia Topi, the brilliant lieutenant of Nana Sahib, the other was the Ranee of Jhansi, the Joan of Arc of the Hindu mutineers. The rebels attacked Cawnpore in force, and General Windham, whom Sir Colin had left in command, was driven back into his entrenchments. Urgent messages were dispatched to the Commander-in-Chief. Impeded though he was by the sick and wounded rescued from Lucknow, the latter marched with all possible speed. On 5 December he sent off the convoy to Allahabad, and on the 6th he attacked the rebels in Cawnpore, and smote them hip and thigh. Cawnpore was saved, and the mutineers, flying before the vigorous pursuit of Sir Hope Grant, were dispersed far and wide.

Over Cawnpore, as over Delhi, the British flag once more waved, never again to be lowered. But Lucknow was still untaken. The Governor-General urged the importance of retaking Lucknow with all possible speed, and thus dealing an effective blow at the growing disaffection in Oudh. On military grounds Sir Colin demurred but loyally yielded to the view that political considerations were paramount, and during the next three months the mutineers were gradually driven in upon Lucknow. Jang Bahadur, the loyal Prime Minister of Nepal, advanced from the north at the head of 9,000 Ghurkas; General Franks drove in the rebels from the east, while Sir Colin himself, at the head of the finest British army which had ever been seen in India, swept up the whole country to the south and west of the city. Re-joining Outram at the Alambagh, he fought a series of severe engagements, and at last, on 21 March 1858, Lucknow finally surrendered.

The recapture of Lucknow dealt a death-blow to any hope of victory which might still be entertained by the mutineers, and it ought to have ended the war. That it failed to do so was due primarily to the apathy which allowed a huge body of mutineers to escape, with their trusted leaders, from Lucknow, and secondly, to the unfortunate effect produced upon the talukdars, or chief landowners of Oudh, by the issue of Lord Canning's proclamation. The terms of this famous proclamation aroused acute controversy both in India and at home. Issued on the morrow of the recapture of Lucknow, it declared that all the chiefs, with six exceptions, having been guilty of rebellion against the Queen had forfeited all their proprietary rights; that if they made instant submission their lives and honour should be safe, provided that their hands 'were not stained with English blood murderously shed', but that for any further privilege 'they must throw themselves upon the justice and mercy of the British Government'. Intended by Canning as a conditional offer of clemency it was interpreted in Oudh as a decree of confiscation. Sir James Outram and John Lawrence, to say nothing of Lord Ellenborough, now President of the Board of Control, regarded the proclamation as a grave error. Lawrence would have offered an amnesty to all who had not been guilty of murder. 'No mutineer', he wrote, 'ever surrenders; for directly he is caught, he is shot or hanged.'

The truth of his words was proved to the hilt during the next few months. Rohilkhand was reduced to submission by the end of May, but not until January 1859 was the last of the organized forces of the rebels finally dispersed. In Oudh, and in Oudh alone, did the Mutiny assume something of the character of a national insurrection, and there can be no question that this was due in large measure to the unfortunate terms of Lord Canning's proclamation. The chiefs believed, erroneously but not unnaturally, that they had little to gain by submission and everything to fear. Consequently they waged for months a guerrilla war which caused infinite embarrassment to the

British forces and their commanders, and yielded them little credit.

Reduction of
the Central Pro-
vinces.

While Sir Colin Campbell was busy in Rohilkhand, Behar, and Oudh, Sir Hugh Rose (afterwards Lord Strathnairn) was gradually reducing the Central Provinces to obedience. That the trouble was virtually confined to these Provinces and did not extend to the Bombay Presidency was due in the main to the firm and prudent statesmanship of the Governor, Lord Elphinstone, and of George Berkeley Seton-Karr, the political officer in charge of the Southern Maratha country. The Central Provinces, the fruit of Dalhousie's doctrine of 'Lapse', were less amenable to control, and their temper gave cause for much anxiety to the Government. On 16 December 1857, Sir Hugh Rose arrived at Indore to take up his command, and during the next six months he gradually reduced the Central Provinces. Jhansi was the centre of insurrection; its leaders were Tantia Topi and the Ranee of Jhansi. Outside Jhansi Sir Hugh won a brilliant victory over Tantia Topi at Betwa (1 April 1858); two days later he captured Jhansi itself, the stronghold of the Ranee, and on 22 May the great fortress of Kalpi. The intrepid Ranee then got possession of Gwalior and induced its inhabitants to proclaim the Nana Sahib as Peshwa. On 17 June, however, the Ranee was killed at the head of her troops, and on the 19th Gwalior was taken by Sir Hugh Rose. But as in Oudh so also in the Central Provinces the capture of the fortresses was followed by a prolonged period of guerrilla warfare. For nine months Tantia Topi successfully eluded the British pursuit, doubling backwards and forwards with baffling rapidity, until at length (April 1859) he was betrayed to his pursuers, was arrested, tried, and convicted of complicity in the massacres of Cawnpore and duly executed (18 April). The Nana Sahib had already disappeared, never again to cross the page of history. With his disappearance, and Tantia Topi's death, the long-drawn tragedy ended. Peace had been formally proclaimed in the preceding July (1858).

A great tragedy the Mutiny unquestionably was; but by no means unrelieved. If it be the essence of tragedy to purify the emotions by pity and fear, the Mutiny did not fail to fulfil it. A brilliant Anglo-Indian has indeed gone so far as to affirm that 'perhaps a more fortunate occurrence than the Mutiny of 1857 never occurred in India', and the saying, if properly understood, may be accepted as true. Truly 'it taught India and the world that the English possessed a national spirit which made light of disaster, which never counted whether the odds against them were two or ten to one; and which marched confident to victory, although the conditions of success appeared all but hopeless'. If at critical moments success ever did appear hopeless, appearance was very far from reality. But for the splendid heroism of men like Havelock and Outram, of John Nicholson, Herbert Edwardes, and James Neill; but for the coolness, courage, wisdom, and self-restraint of John Lawrence and Lord Canning, the Mutiny might have developed into a much more formidable movement than it did, but under the conditions and circumstances of 1857 it could not have succeeded.

Tragic as were many of the incidents, critical as were several moments in the history of the Mutiny, it was suppressed with relative ease. That this was so was due to many contributory causes; primarily, be it repeated, to the unruffled coolness and intrepid courage of Lord Canning himself; to his promptitude in diverting to India the British reinforcements on their way to China, and his refusal to give way to panic; to the skill with which Lord Elphinstone restrained the restlessness of Bombay; to the combination of sternness and conciliation displayed by Lawrence and his colleagues in the Punjab; to the loyalty of the ruling Princes, none of whom, except the Ranee of Jhansi, the Begum of Oudh, and a few minor chieftains, espoused the cause of the mutineers; to the steadfastness of several powerful Ministers, notably Jang Bahadur the ruler of Nepal, Salar Jang of Haidarabad, and Sir Dinkar Rao the minister of the young Sindhia of Gwalior; to the

splendid services rendered at more than one important juncture by Captain Peel and his Naval Brigade, and not least to the heroic fortitude of thousands of individual Englishmen, known and unknown to fame. There were other factors in the suppression of the Mutiny, to which allusion has already incidentally been made. Of these, perhaps the most important was the lack of national unity in India. Lawrence's position in the Punjab would have been intensely critical had not Dost Muhammad of Kabul remained loyal to his treaty obligations; had Sind and Rajputana not kept quiet, had the Sikh chieftains not given substantial aid. Other causes contributed to British success. If Dalhousie's annexations precipitated the outbreak, his introduction of the electric telegraph—the accursed string that strangled us' as one of the mutineers called it—did much to facilitate its suppression. Then there was the absence—frequently noted—of any really capable leader among the rebels. Perhaps the nearest approach to one was the young Ranee of Jhansi, described by Sir Hugh Rose as the 'best and bravest' of the native leaders. In striking contrast to the poverty of leadership among the mutineers was the plethora of talent, still more the remarkable demonstration of character, on the British side. Some of these have been mentioned above, but there were many others 'whose names will be had in everlasting remembrance'.

The most important cause remains to be noticed. The insurrection was not due to a national movement; from first to last it was localized and partial. Nowhere, except in Oudh and in a lesser degree in the Central Provinces, did the Mutiny assume anything of the character of a national insurrection. Had it done so it could hardly have been quelled by the efforts, however splendid and heroic, of a handful of Englishmen, planted in the midst of a teeming population, alien to themselves in tradition, in race, and in creed.

Results. Of the results of the Mutiny, the first and by far the

most momentous was to terminate the existence of the Chartered Company which had founded the British Empire in India, and to bring the peoples of that Empire into direct and immediate obedience to the Crown. The change was not abrupt. For nearly three-quarters of a century the Company and Parliament had exercised a joint sovereignty. Pitt's 'dual system', established as a makeshift in 1784, despite the fact that the theory was illogical, and the machinery exceedingly cumbrous, had worked in practice unexpectedly well. But clearly the time had come for bringing the theory into closer correspondence with the facts, and transferring to the Crown direct, formal, and exclusive responsibility for the government of a great Dependency.

The Company did not acquiesce in its own extinction without a strong and dignified protest, drafted by one of its most distinguished servants, John Stuart Mill. The Petition reminded Parliament that the Company had founded an Empire in the East while the Crown and Parliament were losing one in the West; it claimed that 'the more light is thrown upon India and its administration, the more evident it will become that the Government in which [the Company] have borne a part has been not only one of the purest in intention, but one of the most beneficent in act, ever known among mankind'; that during the last and present generations 'it has been one of the most rapidly improving Governments in the world. . . . And they are satisfied that whatever further improvements may be hereafter affected in India can only consist in the development of germs already planted, and in building on foundations already laid under their authority and in a great measure by their express instructions.' The claim was amply justified, but the protest did not avail to avert the doom of the Company. An 'Act for the Better Government of India'—a title which has now, by repetition, become almost ironic—was passed with little opposition, save from Lord Ellenborough, through both Houses, and received the Royal Assent on 2 August 1858. Four weeks later (1st Sept.) the Court of

Directors held its last meeting, issued its last instructions to its servants in India, and offered to the Crown a stately (though involuntary) gift. 'Let Her Majesty'—their message ran—'appreciate the gift—let her take the vast country and the teeming millions of India under her direct control; but let her not forget the great corporation from which she has received them, nor the lessons to be learnt from its success'. Not less touching in its simple dignity was the message in which the Company took leave of its servants:

'The Company has the great privilege of transferring to the service of Her Majesty such a body of civil and military officers as the world has never seen before. A Government cannot be base . . . that has reared two such services. . . . In those services lowly merit has never been neglected. The best men have risen to the highest place. . . . They may have been roughly nurtured and rudely schooled . . . but if they have had the right stuff in them they have made their way to eminence, and have distanced men of the highest connexions and most flattering antecedents.'

It was all true; but the end had come. The Act transferred all the territories, powers, and revenues of the Company to the Crown, which was to exercise its powers through a Secretary of State who was to succeed to all the powers previously vested in the Company and in the Board of Control. He was to be assisted by a Council of fifteen members, eight of whom were to be nominated by the Crown and seven in the first instance by the Directors of the Company, and subsequently co-opted by the Council. Not fewer than nine members of the Council were to be persons who had served for at least ten years in India and had left that country less than ten years ago. No member of Council was to sit in Parliament; all were to hold office, like judges, during good behaviour, to be removable only on a joint address from both Houses and to receive £1,200 a year, charged, like the salaries of the Secretary of State and the Under-Secretaries, on the revenues of India. The Secretary of State was to have a casting vote in the Council,

and might even overrule a majority, but was required to record his reasons. He has never consequently been as much of an autocrat in his own office as other Secretaries of State. His Council was to be known as the Council of India, in contradistinction to the Viceroy's Council. The Board of Control was abolished. The Secretary of State became successor in title to all the property of the Company, and responsible for the debts of the Company and for the payment of dividends on its stock. Patronage was transferred to the Crown, which was to appoint the Governor-General and Governors of Provinces, and to approve the Governor-General's nominations of Lieutenant-Governors. Admission to the Civil Service was to be open to all natural-born British subjects, after an open Competitive Examination as required by the Act of 1853. All the naval and military forces of the Company were transferred to the Crown, but were to retain their local character and existing privileges and rates of pay, to be provided out of Indian revenues. (These changes were effected by subsequent Statutes passed 1861-3.) Finally, the Act provided that an Indian Budget should be presented annually to both Houses of Parliament, together with a statement of the 'Moral and Material Progress of India'.

The transference of authority effected by this Act was formally announced to the peoples of India on 1 November 1858. The terms of the proclamation were carefully revised by the Queen who, throughout her reign and particularly after the outbreak of the Mutiny, took the closest personal interest in Indian affairs. The first draft was the work of Lord Stanley, as President of the Board of Control, who became the first Secretary of State for India in the Ministry of his father the Earl of Derby. Lord Stanley, though a sound man of business, had none of his father's literary gifts, and was, moreover, as he lamentably demonstrated at the Colonial Office in the 'eighties, wholly devoid of political imagination. The Queen, far from satisfied with Stanley's draft, asked Lord Derby to

The
Queen's
Proclamation.

'write it himself in his excellent language, remembering that it

is a female Sovereign who speaks to more than one hundred million of Eastern people, on assuming the direct government over them after a bloody civil war, giving them pledges which her future reign is to redeem and explaining the principles of her government. Such a document should breathe feelings of generosity, benevolence, and religious feeling, pointing out the privileges which the Indians will receive in being placed on an equality with the subjects of the British Crown, and the prosperity following in the train of civilization.*

The Queen's wishes were respected, and with admirable results. More particularly were her personal views revealed in the passage with reference to religion:

'Firmly relying', said her Majesty, 'on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we disclaim alike the right and the desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects. It is our Royal will and pleasure that no one shall in any wise suffer for his opinions, or be disquieted by reason of his religious faith or observance. We will show to all alike the equal and impartial protection of the law, and we do strictly charge and enjoin those who may be in authority under us that they abstain from all interference with the religious belief or worship of any of our subjects under pain of our highest displeasure. It is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever class or creed, be fully and freely admitted to any offices the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, abilities, and integrity duly to discharge.'

Finally, the Queen declared that the aim of her government should be the benefit of all her subjects resident in India. 'In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward.'

The proclamation produced the happiest effect in India, and the Queen's pleasure is reflected in a letter to the Viceroy (2 Dec. 1858).

'It is', she writes, 'a source of great satisfaction and pride to her to feel herself in direct communication with that enormous

* *Q.V.L.* iii. 379.

Empire which is so bright a jewel of her Crown, and which she would wish to see happy, contented, and peaceful. May the publication of her proclamation be the beginning of a new era, and may it draw a veil over the sad and bloody past.' ¹

The Queen's hope was, at least partially, realized; the proclamation inaugurated a new era.

¹ Ibid., 389.

XII

THE INDIA OF THE QUEEN

The Crown and the Princes. Stabilization. The Civil Service.

A new era. WITH the assumption by the Crown of the direct sovereignty and the immediate government of India, the history of British India, nay of India, enters evidently on a new era. The century which preceded the Mutiny was characterized, as we have seen, by almost perpetual unrest in India, by the steady expansion of the territorial possessions of the Company, and not least by the personal rule of a series of rulers of outstanding ability and character.

The Viceroy. From the days of Lord Clive to those of Lord Canning the personality of the chief officers of the Company was the pivotal consideration to be kept in view by the historian. Indian history was best told, therefore, in a series of biographies; 'periods' were naturally marked by 'reigns'. Since the Mutiny that is less true. The ruler still counts for much, and happily among the post-Mutiny rulers of India there have been at least three of exceptional ability. But on the whole these Viceroys have been lesser men than the Governors-General. The office of Viceroy, though one of the greatest under the Crown, has somewhat diminished in importance.

This statement may savour of paradox; yet the reasons are not far to seek. Vicerealty implies a king, and dignified as the position of a deputy may be it implies the existence of a superior. The Crown has since 1858 necessarily meant more in India than before; the *Royal Titles Act* of 1876, though severely criticized at the time, gave formal expression to a real change which had already taken place, and the ceremonial visits of members of the Royal House, culminating in the Imperial visit of the King-Emperor and Queen-Empress in 1911, have given substance to the assumption of the Imperial Title.

But the modern Viceroy is not only the deputy of the King-Emperor, he is subordinate to the Secretary of State. The Governor-General had always, it is true, served a master; after 1784 he had served two masters. But his masters were a long way off. Means of communication were cumbrous. A Governor-General could act first, and long afterwards could meekly accept rebuke for what had been for many months an accomplished fact. He was, indeed, a real and personal ruler, liable, of course, to rebuke and even to recall, but in the meantime virtually irresponsible. The passing of the Act of 1858, the setting up of a Secretary of State, and still more the invention of the electric telegraph have changed all that. A Viceroy to-day can be rebuked and repudiated in a hour, and replaced in a month. To say that he has become a mere 'clerk at the end of a wire' is a palpable exaggeration, but it is the exaggeration of a truth.

If the position of the Viceroys has diminished in importance, the work they have been called to do has altered in character. 'Conquest and expansion'—these are the words which sum up the history of British India from 1757–1858, 'Defence and development' are the words selected by Sir William Hunter to describe the work done between the suppression of the Mutiny and the close of the century. Yet the work of the earlier Viceroys of the period can perhaps best be described by the word *stabilization*. We sought no new conquests, but we were determined to make our previous conquests secure. The map of British India (excluding Burma) is to-day the map drawn by Lord Dalhousie. The army in India has not lacked experience of actual warfare, but with the exception of the second Afghan War 1878–80, the third Burmese War (which was little more than a military parade, though on a very imposing scale) in 1885, and the Tirah campaigns which Lord Curzon felt compelled to undertake in 1897–8, military operations have been of a minor character and mostly directed against the fierce and far from despicable tribesmen on our north-western frontiers.

'We desire no extension of our present territorial possessions; and while we will permit no aggression upon our dominions or our rights to be attempted with impunity, we shall sanction no encroachment on those of others. We shall respect the rights, dignity, and honour of native princes as our own; and we desire that they, as well as our own subjects, should enjoy that prosperity and that social advancement which can only be secured by internal peace and good government.'

No paragraph in the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 was of greater significance than this. Of its letter and spirit the British Government has, from that day to this, been scrupulously observant. The new situation was admirably summed up by Lord Canning in 1862:

'The last vestiges of the royal house of Delhi, from which, for our own convenience, we had long been content to receive a vicarious authority, have been swept away. The last pretender to the representation of the Peshwa has disappeared. The Crown of England stands forward as the unquestioned ruler and paramount power in all India, and is for the first time brought face to face with its Feudatories. There is a reality in the suzerainty of the Sovereign of England which has never existed before, and which is not only felt, but eagerly acknowledged, by the chiefs.'

The Crown and the Princes. Nothing could, indeed, have been more satisfactory than the relations which since the Mutiny have on the whole subsisted between the Suzerain and the Feudatory Princes. To these good relations many causes have contributed. The Princes quickly came to understand that the Queen meant what she said: that the period of conquest and expansion was at an end; that the chiefs might look forward to a period of stabilization and tranquillity; that if they were no longer permitted to engage in their wonted occupation and attack their neighbours, their neighbours would no longer be allowed to attack them. The Sovereign Power, while prohibiting attack, was bound to accept responsibility for defence. In fine, it imposed on all alike the *Pax Britannica*. The prohibition of internal wars had, as we shall see, curious and unexpected reactions; but meanwhile

the chiefs at any rate enjoyed a sense of security, not only as against the Paramount Power but against their neighbours, such as they had never known before. The Paramount Power deliberately renounced the doctrine of 'Lapse', so profitably applied by Lord Dalhousie, and definitely recognized the right of the Princes, in default of natural heirs, to secure the succession to their thrones by the well-established custom of 'adoption'. But recognition of these old privileges and customs involved a corollary. If we guaranteed the thrones of the Princes, we were bound also to secure the well-being of their subjects. A trustee cannot allow a beneficiary to gamble with his capital-assets. To the enjoyment of privileges there was a fundamental condition. Rights involve duties; privileges must not be enjoyed at the expense of subjects deprived of the only effective check upon despotism.

'If we respect your rights and privileges, you should also respect the rights and regard the privileges of those who are placed beneath your care. If we support you in your power, we expect in return good government. We demand that everywhere . . . justice and order shall provide that every man's property shall be secure; that the traveller shall come and go in safety; that the cultivator shall enjoy the fruits of his labour, and the trader the produce of his commerce; that you shall make roads and undertake the construction of those works of irrigation which will improve the condition of the people and swell the revenues of your States; that you shall encourage education and provide for the relief of the sick.'

These words addressed by Lord Mayo to the Rajput Princes may serve to illustrate the spirit in which the Suzerainty, as well as the Sovereignty, of India was undertaken by the Queen and her Viceroys, the 'fundamental postulate', as it has been happily termed, of the new order.

No Viceroy did more than Lord Mayo to confirm the 'fundamental postulate', to conciliate the respect and affection of the Princes to whose government it was applied. He insisted that while it might be necessary, in the last resort, to displace a native ruler, in the interests of

his subjects, his misrule must never be used as an excuse for annexation. If the misdeeds of a Rajah (as was the case in Alwar) became intolerable, the rights of the lawful heir were preserved by the appointment of a Native Regency, or the temporary administration of the State by British officers. Lord Mayo realized, as his brilliant biographer has said, that 'the process by which an Indian State casts its old skin of anarchy is necessarily a slow one. He kept his hands clean of any faintest stain of annexation. But he made every feudatory in India understand that if he persistently misgoverned his subjects the sceptre would be taken out of his hands.' In due course, however, the sceptre was invariably restored to a native successor, and Lord Mayo did his utmost to fit those successors for the discharge of their responsibilities by establishing the Mayo College at Ajmer and other colleges for the education of the sons of Native Princes. The wise and far-seeing policy of Lord Mayo has borne its appropriate fruit both in the improved government of the Indian States and in the enhanced loyalty of their rulers. The Mayo College, and colleges established on similar lines, such as the Daly College at Indore and the Aitchison College at Lahore, have not, perhaps, fulfilled all the hopes of their founders, but they have done good work for India and are improving. In the development of good relations between the ruling Princes and the Paramount Power, the admirable example set by Lord Mayo has been followed by all his successors, notably by Lord Dufferin, Lord Lansdowne, and Lord Curzon. The results of that policy will be estimated later on.

Admini- We must pass to the less romantic but not less important
trative
Reform topic of administrative reform in post-Mutiny India, and it
(a) The is significant that one of the first Acts passed to effect that
Civil
Service. object was the *Indian Civil Service Act* of 1861 (24 & 25
Vict. c. liv).

Of all the institutions which England has given to India the Civil Service is the most remarkable. Lord Zetland describes it as 'unique among the organizations of the

world'. Mr. Lloyd George, in one of the last speeches he made in Parliament as Prime Minister, spoke of that Service as the 'steel frame of the whole structure', and declared that his American friends regarded its achievement as 'a miracle of the British gift for government'. Members of that Service, he insisted, 'are discharging a very great trust on behalf of this country and on behalf of the people of India. Without their loyalty and capacity, and their indomitable and continuous courage and patience, India could not possibly be saved from falling into the position of anarchy from which this country rescued her a century and more ago.' That tribute was no less eloquent than just, and was followed by an emphatic pledge given on behalf of His Majesty's Government: 'There is one institution we will not interfere with, there is one institution we will not cripple, and that is the institution which built up the British Raj—the British Civil Service in India.'¹ That service, in its strict sense, consists of about 1,000 men.² By 1,000 men, of whom about three-quarters are still British,³ 250,000,000 of Asiatics are governed, and as well governed as any people on earth.

The nucleus of that Service was created by Warren Hastings, but the Covenanted Service dates from the passing of the *East India Company Act* of 1793, which reserved to members of that Service the principal civil offices in India under the rank of Member of Council. 'Covenanted', because all the superior servants of the Company were required (as members of the I.C.S. still are) to subscribe for their pensions, but were at the same time required to enter into a covenant not to trade, or receive presents, &c. Under this Act there gradually developed a body of trained administrators 'around whom', to use the apt words of Sir J. W. Kaye, 'the old commercial traditions did not cling, who had not graduated in chicanery, or grown grey in fraud and corruption.'

¹ *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. 157, cols. 1506-17 (2 Aug. 1922).

² 1,014 on 1 January 1930.

³ By 1939 the proportions it is estimated will be reduced to 50 per cent.

Lord Wellesley established a College at Calcutta for the training of the Company's Civil Servants; in 1813 Colleges were established in England at Haileybury and Addiscombe for the same purpose, and under the *Charter Act* of 1813, though the appointments were still left to the Directors, the Board of Control took power to approve the regulations made by the Directors for their training colleges both in England and India. The *Charter Act* of 1833 opened the service to Indians, by its historic declaration that 'no native of the said territories, nor any natural born subject of His Majesty resident therein shall, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment under the Company'. For some time nothing much came of this declaration, and still less of the tentative introduction of the principle of competition by examination. Four candidates were to be nominated for each vacancy and the nominees were then to compete in an 'examination in such branches of knowledge and by such examiners as the Board of Control should direct'. But, although temporarily abandoned after a brief trial, the system of open competition was finally and permanently adopted for the Indian Service in 1853.

The *Charter Act* passed in 1853 was indeed the real beginning of a revolution in the position of the Civil Service not in India only, but incidentally, and after some interval, in England also. The Act took away from the Court of Directors the right of patronage to Indian appointments, and directed that patronage should henceforward be exercised in accordance with regulations framed by the Board of Control. The scheme was drafted by Macaulay, who presided over a Committee appointed in 1854 by Sir Charles Wood. The rules have from time to time been modified in detail, but in substance they still govern all appointments to the Civil Service. For more than half a century some of the ablest men from Oxford and Cambridge and the great Public Schools took service in India and made the Indian 'public service a model of efficiency

and purity. But recruitment hardly kept pace with Indian requirements. The rapid territorial expansion under Wellesley and his successors made it necessary (and in some of the more turbulent districts desirable) to employ in administrative work soldiers and even uncovenanted civilians. The Punjab is one notable example of the success of this departure from routine regulations. Burma is another.

The Act of 1861 was passed in order, among other things, to validate these wholly justifiable irregularities, and at the same time to regulate more strictly the Covenanted Service. Under the *Charter Acts* of 1793 and 1833 all promotion was strictly regulated by seniority, and appointments were confined to the servants of the particular Presidency in which the office was held. The Act of 1861 abolished the rule as to seniority, scheduled a number of appointments which were to be (and still are) reserved to members of the Covenanted Service, removed all statutory restrictions on appointments not so reserved, and gave to the authorities the power, under special circumstances, to appoint even to the reserved offices other persons who must, however, have resided at least seven years in India, and satisfied the same tests as are applied to members of the Covenanted Service. Moreover, the unreserved appointments were to be provisional only, and unless specifically approved within a given time by the Secretary of State in Council, were to be void. Very sparing use was in fact made of this power. It should be added that the schedule of 'reserved' posts did not apply to the Non-Regulation Provinces such as the Punjab, Burma, Oudh, Sind, Assam, the Central Provinces, and the North-West Provinces; but between 1876 and 1907, the Non-Regulation System was everywhere abandoned except in Burma and the North-West Frontier Province.

An Act passed in 1870, on the initiative of the Duke of Argyll, having recited that 'it is expedient that additional facilities should be given for the employment of natives in India, of proved merit and ability, in the Civil Service' of

Civil
Service
Act
(1861).

Act of
1870.

India, authorized the Government of India, with the approval of the Secretary of State, to frame rules for the appointment of Indians without requiring them to pass the examination in London. The Duke of Argyll's idea was that they should be appointed rather to judicial than to executive posts, but nothing came of this Act until in 1879 Lord Lytton's government framed a series of rules for a Statutory Civil Service.

The Statutory Civil Service, 1879. Under this scheme one-sixth of the 'reserved' posts, in addition to some of the most important posts in the uncovenanted service, were to be filled by natives of India, appointed under carefully made rules. In order to give reality to the concession, the number of appointments made after examination in England was, in 1880, reduced by one-sixth, but the scheme did not work satisfactorily, it failed to attract the higher classes of Indians, and only about sixty Indians had been appointed when, in 1891, the system was again changed.

The Aitchison Commission. In 1886 a Commission was appointed under the presidency of Sir Charles Aitchison, who had himself recently held some of the highest posts in the Service. It was instructed to 'devise a scheme which might reasonably be hoped to possess the necessary elements of finality, and to do full justice to the claims of natives of India to higher employment in the public service'.

This Commission made some important recommendations which were carried out in 1891. The Civil Service was henceforward to consist of three branches: (i) the Imperial Indian Civil Service was to replace the old Covenanted Service and to be recruited, as formerly, by open competition in England, though equally open to Indians and Englishmen; (ii) each Province was to have its own Provincial Service, formed by the amalgamation of a certain number of posts previously belonging to the Covenanted Service, and the higher appointments in the older uncovenanted Service. This Provincial Service was to be recruited by the Local Government in the Province by direct nomination, by competitive examination, or by

promotion from the Subordinate Service; (iii) The 'Subordinate Service' was to consist of the lower grade appointments of the old uncovenanted class. The two latter classes are recruited almost entirely from Indians; the first class, comprising all the most important posts, continued to be mainly filled by Englishmen, though there was a gradually increasing infusion of Indians, a large proportion of whom were educated at British Universities, and all of whom sat for examination in London. Categories corresponding with those in the Civil Service were also introduced into the more important technical services such as the police, forest, public works, and education services.

Indians were far from satisfied with these changes. They resented the gradations of superiority implied in the Aitchison classifications, and complained that in the Imperial Service, the progress made in 'Indianisation'—as it began to be called—was lamentably slow. Nor can it be denied that there was substance in the complaint. A great Indian patriot like Gokhale had the courage to tell his countrymen that the British officials in India are 'a body of picked men; that man for man they are better than ourselves; they have a higher standard of duty, higher notions of patriotism, higher notions of loyalty to each other, higher notions of organized work and of discipline'. The tribute courageously paid was entirely deserved. Nevertheless Gokhale shared the chagrin of his countrymen at their failure to obtain the higher posts in the public services. To meet their complaints a Royal Commission was appointed under the Chairmanship of Lord Islington in 1912, but their Report was not published, owing to the outbreak of war, until 1917, and by that time, as we shall see, any interest which the Report might have had was lost in the larger declaration of policy made by Mr. Montagu in August of that year.

Meanwhile, a significant change had already taken place. Despite all the authoritative declarations of policy, despite the recommendations of one Royal Commission after another, all the posts in the Public Service which carried

Cessation
of English
recruit-
ment for
I.C.S.

a salary of £800 a year or upwards were still, prior to the World-War, with the exception of ninety, filled by Englishmen. The War, in more ways than one, materially modified the situation.

During the War recruiting in England was suspended, and no sooner did the War come to an end than the *Indian Government Act* of 1919 revolutionized the whole position. But that Act, so far from satisfying Indian aspirations, served rather to stimulate anti-British agitation: the impression was given that the English were 'packing-up', and that within a measurable distance of time there would not be an English soldier or an English civilian left in India. Grotesque as that anticipation was, the impression was strengthened by the permission given to All-India Service officers to retire, before they had completed the normal period of service, on a proportionate pension.

Discouraged by the prospect opened out by the legislation of 1919, harassed and impeded in the performance of their duties by the non-co-operation movement of 1920-2, subjected to most unfair criticism by the inexperienced legislators elected to the Provincial Legislatures, officers, particularly in the Civil Service and the Police, availed themselves in large numbers of this permission. By 1922, 200 officers had retired on the special terms; by 1924 the number had risen to 345, and as most of these were men of from ten to twenty-five years' service, there was serious danger of a complete disorganization of the governmental machine.

For the Civil Servant in India is the Government. From the first he has been, as was lately observed, 'a curious mixture of Minister of the Crown, Chief Permanent Official, and maid of all work'. The unit of administration is the District, and the District officer has been to the vast majority of Indians the 'Government'—at once autocrat, counsellor, and friend. That this Government should be suddenly deprived of the services of a large proportion of its most valuable and most experienced officers was an exceedingly serious matter. Moreover, recruiting suspended

during the War, was not resumed after its close. Oxford was for sixty years one of the principal recruiting centres for the 'Indian Civil'. During the five years before the War it contributed nearly 120 recruits to that service. During the years 1921-3 the aggregate was only ten. So it was at Cambridge and elsewhere.

To meet this wholly novel, and very serious situation, yet another Royal Commission was, in 1923, appointed by Lord Peel, then Secretary of State, under the chairmanship of Lord Lee of Fareham. This Commission was concerned only with the 'Superior Civil Services' i.e. the All-India Services and Central Services of corresponding status. It reported in 1924, at which time the strength of the Services under review was as follows:

	<i>Strength.</i>
1. Indian Civil Service	1,350
2. Police Service	732
3. Forest Service (including the Forest Engineers Service)	417
4. Service of Engineers (comprising an Irrigation Branch and a Roads and Buildings Branch) .	728
5. Educational Service	421
6. Agricultural Service	157
7. Veterinary Service	54
8. Medical Service (Civil)	420
	<hr/> 4,279

The first three of the above Services and the Irrigation Branch of the fourth were, as the Statutory Commission pointed out, operating in the field 'reserved' under the Act of 1919, and 'comprised the Services upon which public security and finance mainly depend'. Accordingly the Lee Commission recommended that recruiting for them should remain in the hands of the Secretary of State. The rest of the Services operating in the sphere 'transferred' to responsible ministers in the Provinces were, saving the existing rights of officers, to become Provincial Services. To this rule the Medical Service was, for obvious reasons,

to form a partial exception. Thus the Commission adhered logically and closely to the principle of the Act of 1919. Their recommendations, as Sir Alexander Muddiman, the Home Member, put it, 'amount to this—that the Services should be controlled by the authority which is ultimately responsible for the administration of the subjects with which they deal'. This meant in effect, that in the 'transferred' sphere of the Provincial Governments, the whole administration would be staffed by Indians; that in the superior posts of the Civil Service the proportion of Indians and Englishmen would, by a gradual process of 'Indianisation', become (by 1939), 50 to 50, as against the existing (1 January 1929) proportion of 894 Englishmen against 367 Indians; while in the Police the English would be reduced from 564 to 434, and the Indians be increased from 128 to 251. If everything goes according to calculation there will thus be by 1939 less than 1,200 Englishmen in the two 'Security' Services to deal with a population of 250 million people.

The Lee Commission also dealt in a way 'generally accepted as adequate' (according to the Simon Commission) with the grievances and apprehensions of the English members of the great Indian Services, with the result that British recruitment is now said to be in a 'more healthy condition', and that the rate of retirement on proportionate pension has rapidly diminished.

The Statutory (Simon) Commission. The Statutory Commission recommended that the 'Security Services' (i.e. the higher posts of the Civil Service and the Police) should continue to be recruited on an All-India basis by the Secretary of State, who should have power, after consultation with the Government of India and the Provincial Governments, to require the latter to employ these Services 'in such numbers and in such appointments as he thinks necessary'. The quota thus employed would 'vary according to circumstances and might eventually' (but 'not for some time to come') 'disappear'. Provincial responsibility for the maintenance of Law and Order is, nevertheless, to be absolute. Diarchy

in this, as in other spheres of Provincial Government, is to disappear; full responsibility is to be vested in ministers. Only in the case of a grave emergency would the Governor be authorized to override their advice.

That the Commission had themselves acute misgivings as to the wisdom of their final recommendations is obvious from the language of their Report.¹ Those misgivings cannot have been dissipated by the events which have occurred—notably at Cawnpore—since its publication, and they are widely shared. As to the future, everything must obviously depend on the course taken by constitutional evolution. But, in any event, it is certain that the position of Civil Servants, of the Police, and indeed of all the All-Indian Services, will more and more approximate to that held by the corresponding Services (where they exist) in this country. Indian Civil Servants have hitherto been indispensable cogs in a machine modelled on autocratic lines. The qualities primarily required in men to whom the Government, virtually absolute, of vast districts has been committed, have been resourcefulness and initiative. Nor have they failed to exhibit them. What, asked Lord Curzon, in one of his farewell speeches in India, is the secret of the success which has attended the work of the 'most efficient and high-minded Service in the world'? His answer was unambiguous: 'It lies not in systems or rules, not even exclusively in training or education. It consists in the man. . . . So long as we can continue to send to this country the pick of the youth of our own . . . we are safe, and India is safe also'.²

Since those words were spoken (in 1905) the political conditions have fundamentally altered in India; but unless and until England should decide on the complete abandonment of India, the truth of Lord Curzon's words will remain unimpaired. Only so long as the Services are maintained in the full efficiency which have hitherto distinguished them can we remain in India with the self-respect due to ourselves, or with advantage to the peoples of the sub-continent.

¹ e.g. ii, p. 48.

² *Speeches*, p. 563.

XIII

THE PROBLEM OF EDUCATION

‘THE man in India who has grasped the educational problem has got nearer to the heart of things than any of his comrades, and he who can offer to us the right educational prescription is the true physician of the State.’ Those were Lord Curzon’s words. They were spoken at the moment when he was laying down the great office he had filled with such distinction. That they represented his innermost convictions none can doubt who have followed his career, or read the speeches he delivered in India. The educational problem in India raises issues far wider and deeper than that of education. It goes, indeed, to the very root of our unique position as an Imperial Power. Even in the narrower sense it is of all the problems which have confronted British government in India perhaps the most tangled and obstinate. For the improvement of education, as for the elevation of mankind, the mid-Victorians had a simple receipt: Imitate England. Imitate English political institutions, imitate English sport, learn the English language, study English literature, English history, and English philosophy. This robust faith in all things English was magnificent; but it was not science, nor even, perhaps, politics. It paid too little heed to differences of tradition and of race, and to the stage of civilization which the recipients of such unquestionable benefits had reached. Yet to conquer a country and not to confer upon its people English civilization in its entirety seemed to the Victorian Englishman to be evidence simply of selfishness, and the betrayal of a sacred trust. After all, England was in the nineteenth century the most advanced, the most prosperous, and the most successful country in the world. The best thing poor foreigners could do was to copy her. It is proper to add that many enlightened foreigners shared with Englishmen this conviction. It was not always so. The break-

down of the old Colonial system, the loss of the American Colonies, the concession of legislative independence wrested from us by Ireland, had somewhat chastened the spirit of self-confidence. The issue of the Napoleonic wars, and the immense access of wealth due to the Industrial revolution, had not yet revived it.

The *Quebec Act* of 1774 exists to prove that the Empire-builders of the eighteenth century were, under the pressure of circumstances, capable of appreciating the merits of other traditions and alien cultures. In India, Warren Hastings, under similar pressure, founded in 1781 the Calcutta Madrasa, primarily with the object of providing education for the Mohammedan officers in the Courts of Law. Eleven years later, Jonathan Duncan, then English Resident at Benares and afterwards Governor of Bombay, established, with the entire concurrence of Lord Cornwallis, a Sanskrit college for Hindus at Benares, and in the 'twenties Hindu colleges were similarly established at Agra, Poona, and Calcutta.

Meanwhile serious-minded folk in England, especially those who were influenced by the evangelical movement of the eighteenth century, were concerned that so little was being done for the education—particularly the moral and religious instruction—of the 'natives' of India. Among these philanthropists one of the ablest and most ardent was Charles Grant, who, having made a large fortune in the service of the Company, entered Parliament as member for Inverness-shire (1804-18) and became Chairman of the Court of Directors in 1805. Grant, like Wilberforce and Zachary Macaulay, was a member of the 'Clapham Sect' and in 1792 wrote his *Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic subjects of Great Britain and on the means of improving it*. In this pamphlet, which in 1813 was printed by order of the House of Commons, Grant insisted that it was a national duty to promote educational and evangelizing work in India, and to his powerful advocacy was due the insertion of a clause in the *Charter Act* of 1813 making specific provision ('not less than one lac of rupees

in each year") for 'the revival and improvement of literature, and the encouragement of the learned natives of India, and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants' of British India. The money was mainly spent on the teaching of Sanskrit and Arabic, in providing for the translation of English books into those languages, and in grants to educational societies such as the Book Society and School Society of Calcutta. From 1823 onwards the Bombay Government made grants to a Society for Education in that Presidency, and in the same year a Government Education Committee was established in Bengal. Three years afterwards Madras followed suit.

Mission-
aries and
Educa-
tion. But the first serious attempt to extend a knowledge of Western ideas—of course through the medium of the vernacular languages—to the Indian masses was due to the zeal and devotion of the Christian missionaries. Later on, one of the main obstacles to the extension of popular education arose from the not unnatural identification of 'English' education with religious propaganda. Meanwhile, the zeal of the missionaries was beyond all question, and to them was due the first great impetus to vernacular education among the Indian peoples. A network of indigenous schools, both Brahminic and Moslem, had indeed survived in the villages through all the turmoil of the past centuries, but at the beginning of the nineteenth century native education was at a very low ebb; the teachers were ill-paid, inefficient, and wholly untrained; intellectual darkness was settling down upon a land which in distant days had been distinguished by zeal for education. The first Missionary College was opened at Serampor—then under Danish jurisdiction—in 1818; in 1820 the Anglicans opened Bishop's College at Sibpur. In 1830 Alexander Duff, the famous Scottish missionary and educationist, founded in Calcutta the General Assembly's Institution—a healthy germ from which the Scottish Church's College and School developed. The zeal of the Churches incited to emulation men like David Hare, a Calcutta watchmaker of 'secularist'

sympathies, who with a great Indian reformer, Ram Mohan Roy, founded a Hindu College in Calcutta for the training of native teachers of English. A medical college was founded in 1835.

Meanwhile, the Company's Charter was renewed by the Act of 1833. That Act by the abolition of the commercial monopoly of the Company, and by its insistence upon the employment of Indians in the work of administration, still further turned the attention of the Government of India towards the educational problem.

Under that Act Macaulay, as we have seen, went out to India (1834) as law member of Council, and added to his duties the Presidency of the Committee of Public Instruction. He plunged at once into the thick of the fierce controversy already in progress between those who championed English as the vehicle of higher education, and those who preferred the classical languages of India.

'All educational action', wrote Sir George Trevelyan, 'had been at a standstill for some time back, on account of an irreconcilable difference of opinion in the Committee of Public Instruction: which was divided five against five on either side of a controversy vital, inevitable, admitting of neither postponement nor compromise, and conducted by both parties with a pertinacity and a warmth that was nothing but honourable to those concerned.'

Macaulay's famous Minute of 2 February 1835 practically decided the matter.

'How stands the case?' he asked. 'We have to educate a people who cannot at present be educated by means of their mother-tongue. We must teach them some foreign language. The claims of our own language it is hardly necessary to recapitulate. . . . Whoever knows that language has ready access to all the vast intellectual wealth which all the wisest nations of the earth have created and hoarded in the course of ninety generations. It may safely be said that the literature now extant in that language is of far greater value than all the literature which three hundred years ago was extant in all the

¹ *Life of Lord Macaulay*, p. 290.

languages of the world together. Nor is this all. In India English is the language spoken by the ruling class. It is spoken by the higher class of natives at the seats of government. It is likely to become the language of commerce throughout the seas of the East. It is the language of two great European communities which are rising, the one in the south of Africa, the other in Australasia; communities which are every year becoming more important, and more closely connected with our Indian Empire. Whether we look at the intrinsic value of our literature or at the particular situation of this country, we shall see the strongest reason to think, that, of all foreign tongues, the English tongue is that which would be the most useful to our native subjects. The question now before us is simply whether, when it is in our power to teach this language, we shall teach languages [i.e. Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian] in which, by universal confession, there are no books on any subject which deserve to be compared to our own; whether, when we can teach European science, we shall teach systems which, by universal confession, whenever they differ from those of Europe, differ for the worse; and whether, when we can patronize sound philosophy and true history, we shall countenance at the public expense, medical doctrines which would disgrace an English farrier, astronomy, which would move laughter in the girls at an English boarding-school, history, abounding with kings thirty feet high, and reigns thirty thousand years long, and geography made up of seas of treacle and seas of butter.'

Macaulay's brilliant sarcasm did not exhaust the alternatives; and in Brian Houghton Hodgson, a profound Orientalist who was then Resident at Khatmandu, he encountered a foeman worthy even of his steel. Hodgson maintained that the true issue was not, as Macaulay, with a debater's instinct, had insisted, between English and the classical and sacred languages of India, but between English and the vernacular languages. Taking Bengali as an example, 'the language of thirty-seven millions', Hodgson pointed out that it had already good dictionaries and grammars, and possessed an adequate 'precision and compass', while its close relationship to Sanskrit 'afforded means of enrichment by new terms competent to express

any imaginable modification of thought'. 'If any scheme of public instruction were really to reach the Indian peoples, it must', he insisted, 'take as its basis their mother-tongues.'¹

Macaulay's scheme was based on the idea that the Indian peoples would be reached by a process of infiltration from above. Of this process Hodgson was profoundly mistrustful and predicted what would happen. 'So one-sided a system would', he urged, 'at the cost of Government rear up a vast class of English-educated young men who would look to political or official careers which the Government would be unable to provide for them,' and could result only in 'sending forth a host of grandiloquent grumblers, as able to clamour as unable to work. . . . You have', he added, 'an indigenous system of vernacular instruction which has grown naturally out of the wants of the people. Build upon it.'

Hodgson wrote of what he knew. It was estimated that in Lower Bengal alone there existed no fewer than 100,000 indigenous village schools. Their methods were primitive, and the results, as measured in literacy, were negligible. But Hodgson would have started from them; have encouraged and improved them; have trained their teachers in Normal Schools, and provided them with improved text-books in the vernaculars. His method would, doubtless, have been much slower than Macaulay's, but it would have been far safer than the 'inverted pyramid' erected by the latter.

Macaulay's official position gave him the means of snatching, for the moment, an easy victory. Nor have the fruits of that victory been, even yet, fully and finally gathered in. Nevertheless, it was to the principles and methods of Hodgson that the famous Dispatch of Sir Charles Wood reverted. Lord Hardinge had, in the meantime, made the significant announcement that an 'English' education must be regarded as the exclusive avenue to

Sir
Charles
Wood's
Dispatch,
July
1854.

¹ B. H. Hodgson, *Two Letters on the Education of the People of India*, ap. Hunter's *Life of Hodgson*, pp. 311 seq.

public employment. But despite every kind of official encouragement there were, at the date of Wood's Dispatch, only 129 students in all the Government colleges in Bengal, Behar, and Orissa. Sir Charles Wood did, indeed, give his approval to the schemes already adopted for educating the upper classes through the medium of the English language, literature, philosophy, and history; he proposed that universities should be established in the three Presidency capitals; but the emphasis of the Dispatch was upon the pressing need of popular education and upon the use of the vernacular languages as the only possible media for imparting it. The emancipation of the press (1833) and the abandonment of Persian in the Inferior Courts of Law (1837) gave added point to these proposals. Further, Wood proposed that separate Education Departments should be organized in each Presidency and Lieutenant-Governorship; that an adequate system of inspection should be instituted; that the State should establish a large number of new colleges and schools, technical, secondary, and primary, in all of which the vernaculars should be used, and that generous grants in aid should be made to private institutions. Towards the promotion of education for the Mohammedan minority and for women he showed himself warmly sympathetic; and, finally, he laid great stress on the importance of maintaining complete religious neutrality. It fell, as we have seen, to Lord Dalhousie, himself an enthusiast for education, to carry into effect Wood's policy. He created a new Department for Education; he established normal schools for the training of teachers; he largely increased the number of elementary schools under government control, and he gave generous assistance to non-official schools. Yet the aggregate results of his efforts were disappointing. For this the outbreak of the Mutiny was, of course, primarily responsible; but apart from that there were other, more serious and more permanent obstacles in the path of the educational reformer. By 1870 the total number of elementary schools, either directly conducted, aided, or recognized by the State or by local

authorities in British India, numbered only 16,500, and the pupils therein about half a million. In Lower Bengal the Department of Public Instruction was educating 163,854 children at a cost to the Government of £186,598. Lord Mayo, who had just (1869) taken up the Viceroyalty, was, however, a keen educationist and with the help of Sir George Campbell, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, did much to improve this state of affairs. Mayo had no belief in the theories of Macaulay:

'I dislike', he wrote to a friend, 'this filtration theory. In Bengal we are educating in English a few hundred Babus at great expense to the State. Many of them are well able to pay for themselves, and have no other object in learning than to qualify for Government employ. In the meanwhile we have done nothing towards extending knowledge to the million. The Babus will never do it. The more education you give them, the more they will keep to themselves, and make their increased knowledge a means of tyranny. If you wait till the bad English, which the 400 Babus learn in Calcutta, filters down into the 40,000,000 of Bengal, you will be ultimately a Silurian rock instead of a retired judge. Let the Babus learn English by all means. But let us also try to do something towards teaching the three R's to "Rural Bengal".'

Sir George Campbell did much to carry out the policy of the Viceroy. By 1874 he had, as Sir William Hunter points out, 'covered Bengal with primary schools'; he had more than doubled the number of children receiving instruction therein (400,721 as compared with 163,854 in 1870); he had 'resuscitated the old indigenous mechanism of rural instruction, and without actually curtailing high-class education, had created a bona fide system of public instruction for the people of the country.'¹

Lord Mayo's educational efforts did not stop there. He was deeply impressed by the special needs of certain hitherto neglected classes. For the 'Poor Whites' he did his utmost to provide some means of instruction in the Presidency towns; he urged upon the Local Governments

¹ *Earl of Mayo*, p. 180.

the necessity of making special provision to meet the wants of Mohammedans who 'had fallen behind in the race of life under the British system of public instruction', for the sons of Rajput Chiefs he established, as already mentioned, the Mayo College at Ajmeer, while for the sons of the Princes and Chiefs in general he designed an 'Indian Eton, in which they should mix with each other and learn to fit themselves for the duties of their future position in life'. Unhappily, Lord Mayo's splendid work was cut short by the knife of a convict; but his brief régime was distinguished, nevertheless, by a remarkable advance in the sphere of education.¹

The
Hunter
Commis-
sion. By 1882 the number of public primary schools in British India had increased to 86,000, of their pupils to 2,000,000. But encouraging, and even imposing, as these figures may appear, they meant that hardly the fringe of the educational problem had been touched.² Accordingly in 1882, Lord Ripon appointed a Commission, under the zealous and able presidency of Sir William Hunter, to investigate anew the educational situation, though university and technical education were unfortunately specifically excluded from its purview. Hunter's own position was clear. 'I disbelieve', he said, 'in calling a thin veneer of English culture for the upper classes a system of public instruction.' His Commission was instructed by the Supreme Government so to reorganize education in India that 'the different branches of public instruction should if possible move forward together and with more equal step than hitherto. The principal object, therefore, of the inquiry of the Commission should be the present state of elementary education throughout the [Indian] Empire, and the means by which this can be extended and improved'.

The Commission did their work thoroughly. They visited each of the Greater Provinces, they examined 193 witnesses and considered 323 memorials presented to them by over a quarter of a million people. Their Report con-

¹ Hunter, *Lord Mayo*, pp. 179 seq. and 117 seq.

² There are now (1930) some 250,000 schools with 12,000,000 pupils.

tained no fewer than 200 recommendations grouped under six main heads: (1) Primary education; (2) Secondary and collegiate instruction; (3) Internal mechanism: inspection, text-books and control; (4) The external relations of the Education Department—grants in aid and private effort; (5) Female instruction, and that of classes needing special treatment, such as Mohammedans, the children of noble families, and aboriginal races; (6) Legislation. Technical instruction was, as already mentioned, excluded, to Hunter's regret, from the scope of the Commission's inquiries. How near the subject was to the President's heart may be seen from his Convocation address delivered as Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University in 1887. That address was mainly devoted to a powerful plea for technical education under University auspices. The condition of Great Britain, as regards technical education was, he concluded, bad enough, that of India was incalculably worse:

'Her ancient seats of Empire furnish artificers whose right hand has not lost its cunning. But the teeming millions of Bengal are still wedded to an overtaken soil. The Calcutta University is still a mere examining body, which yearly adds thousands to the crowded professions of law and journalism. It has no faculty of applied science, no workshops for practical training in the arts.'¹

Of Hunter's suggestions in regard to technical education, nothing came. Meanwhile, the Commission of 1882 was not barren of results, which may best be summarized in Hunter's own words:

'The vernacular languages were definitely recognized as the medium of instruction, not only in the indigenous and primary schools, but in a great part of the curriculum of secondary education. . . . The primary schools ceased to be mere nurseries for forcing up little boys into English-teaching institutions.'

The Commission explicitly declared that, 'primary instruction be regarded as the instruction of the masses, through the vernacular, in such subjects as will best fit them for their position in life, and be not necessarily regarded as a

¹ Skrine, *Life of Sir W. W. Hunter*, p. 360.

portion of instruction leading up to the University'. Plainly, the educational 'ladder' was less highly esteemed in those days than it now is. Yet the Hunter Commission did not, as will be seen later, kick it down. On the whole, however, the results of the Hunter Report, despite the fact that the Government adopted practically all its recommendations, were disappointingly meagre, though Hunter could point with justifiable pride to the fact that by 1894, out of the four million pupils in Indian Schools and Colleges recognized by the State, three and half millions were receiving education entirely in the vernacular, and the remainder partly in the vernacular and partly in the English language. The most important outcome of the Hunter Commission was, however, rather in the sphere of secondary than of primary education. As regards the latter there were by 1902—thirty years after the reforms of Lord Mayo—only about 98,000 public primary schools in British India, with some 3,200,000 scholars. The truth is that the obstacles in the path of elementary education were, as a brilliant French critic has pointed out, almost insurmountable. The most formidable were the incredulity of the people as to the value of the article offered to them—always excepting, of course, the 'English colleges with their passport to public employment'—and the incompetence of the ill-paid and ill-educated teachers.

'Possessed', writes M. Joseph Chailley, 'of only half developed minds, which have with difficulty received some rudiments of very elementary knowledge, those teachers are at most capable of repeating to their pupils what has been told to them. They cannot change the character of the lesson, even in the direction of simplicity.'¹

This fatal faculty for verbal reproduction is not, be it observed, confined to the teachers of elementary schools.

Lord Curzon's Reforms. Such was, in rough outline, the educational situation which confronted one of the greatest of reforming Viceroys when he reached India in 1898. Of all the eminent Englishmen who, down to that time, had ruled India Lord Curzon

¹ Cf. Chailley, *Administrative Problems of British India*, pp. 490 seq.

was, in an academic sense, incomparably the most distinguished. That he should, to use his own words, have 'thrown himself with burning zeal into the subject of educational reform' was only natural. In a remarkable address to the Educational Conference which he summoned to Simla (2 Sept. 1901), and over which he personally presided, the Viceroy surveyed the whole field of education. In a second address at Simla to the Directors of Public Instruction on the eve of his departure from India (20 Sept. 1905) he summed up the educational policy and achievements of his memorable administration. By any one who desires to understand the problem, these addresses, with a third delivered at the Annual Convocation of Calcutta University (13 Feb. 1904), deserve to be studied with close attention.¹

The young Viceroy by no means underrated the importance of the reforms effected by his predecessors; but neither did he ignore the weak points in their handiwork. We started, he declared, on the wrong tack 'by a too slavish imitation of English models and to this day we have never purged ourselves of the taint'. He was fully alive to the fatal results of Macaulay's colossal blunder: his erection of an 'inverted pyramid'; his ignorant prejudice against the vernacular languages of India. 'Ever since the cold breath of Macaulay's rhetoric passed over the field of the Indian languages and Indian text-books, the elementary education of the people in their own tongues has shrivelled and pined.' The vernaculars, Lord Curzon added,

'are the living languages of this great continent. English is the vehicle of learning and advancement to the small minority; *but* for the vast bulk it is a foreign tongue which they do not speak and rarely hear. If the vernaculars contained no literary models, no classics, I might not be so willing to recommend them. But we all know that in them are enshrined famous treasures of literature and art; while even the secrets of modern knowledge are capable of being communicated thereby in an

¹ They are printed *in extenso* in *Lord Curzon in India* (ed. Raleigh), pp. 313-61.

idiom and in phrases which will be understood by millions of people to whom our English terms and ideas will never be anything but an unintelligible jargon.'

It was a mistake, too, to assume that because certain subjects were adapted to the Western intellect they could be equally assimilated by the Eastern. As for University education it was, Lord Curzon held, a most unfortunate thing that the Universities of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, 'the first fruits of the broad and liberal Education Dispatch of 1854', should have been founded on the model of London University—at that time a purely examining body, and that, later on, Lahore and Allahabad should have adopted, though with some differences of constitution, a similar model. Worst of all: 'by making education the sole avenue to employment in the service of the State, we unconsciously made examination the sole test of education', and condemned the teachers to become 'merely the purveyors of a certain article to a class of purchasers'. The consequence is that 'while we trim the wick of the intellect with mechanical accuracy, we have hardly learned how to light up the lamp of the soul', and to many students 'the University means nothing more than the final stage in a long and irksome series of examinations'.¹ An Indian Oxford or an Indian Cambridge could not, of course, be created in a moment by a stroke of the pen, but something could be done to raise the deplorably low standard of higher education, to improve the teaching and the textbooks in the affiliated colleges. Secondary education was less unsatisfactory than Higher or Primary education; but technical instruction was deplorably neglected. Such was the main burden of the Viceroy's searching analysis.

He was not, however, content with merely negative criticism. He promptly took steps to remedy the defects he so clearly discerned. The first step was the appointment of a singularly competent Director-General of Education, in the person of Mr. (now Sir) H. W. Orange. In 1902 a

¹ The above citations are from more than one speech, but they faithfully reproduce Lord Curzon's considered opinions.

Universities Commission was appointed under the Presidency of Sir Thomas Raleigh, formerly Legal Member of Council, and their recommendations were largely followed in the legislation of 1903-4. Finally there came the comprehensive Education Resolution of 1904.

What had, in fact, been accomplished by all this activity? In the first place, a great impetus was given to primary education. When Lord Curzon took office four out of every five Indian villages were without a school; three out of every four Indian boys were without formal education of any kind; of Indian girls thirty-nine out of every forty. A large annual grant—thirty-nine lacs—was devoted to the extension and improvement of elementary education. Training schools for teachers were multiplied in every direction, and the pay of the teachers, where inadequate, was increased. For secondary education more teachers, more competent teachers, and more inspectors were provided. The commercial and industrial sides of secondary schools, as against the purely literary, were developed, and greater emphasis was laid on teaching than on examinations. As regards Higher Education, the governing bodies of the Universities were entirely re-organized; the duty of teaching as well as examining was enjoined upon them and greater power and scope were given to the teachers; stringent conditions were laid down for all Colleges which sought affiliation to a University, and stress was laid upon the importance of providing hostel accommodation for students who did not reside with parents or guardians. Of all these reforms the inspiring motive was, in Lord Curzon's own words, 'the casting off and throwing away of the miserable gyves and manacles that had been fastened upon the limbs of the youth of India, stunting their growth, crippling their faculties and tying them down'.

Lord Curzon's splendid efforts to improve Indian education earned him no gratitude. The masses were entirely indifferent to them; the advanced politicians were bitterly hostile. He was accused of a sinister attempt to bar the

door of opportunity to Indian youth, and to undermine the influence of their natural leaders. His name, as he wrote to the Secretary of State, was 'loudly hissed as the author of the doom of higher education in India'. The Viceroy was, indeed, strong enough to carry his reforms as far as the statute-book, but passive resistance prevented them from getting any farther. 'The changes actually brought about were', as his biographer sorrowfully confesses, 'small out of all proportion either to the time and thought which the Viceroy had devoted to them or to the violence of the opposition with which they had been assailed. . . . In its broad outline the system of higher education remained much as it had been before.'¹

Calcutta University Commission, 1917-19. In little more than a decade after Lord Curzon's departure yet another attempt was made to find a remedy for the admitted defects of higher education in India. A strong Commission was appointed in 1917, under the distinguished chairmanship of Dr. (now Sir Michael) Sadler, and more melancholy reading than that provided in their Report (1919) it were difficult to imagine. Lord Curzon might propose, but the Indian politician disposed. The craze for examinations, so far from being checked, was stimulated. In 1917 so fewer than 16,000 students sat for the Matriculation examination of the Calcutta University alone, and the Simon Commission reported that the number of its students had in 1930 reached the amazing total of 29,000. Meanwhile the Sadler Commission found that 'an effective synthesis between college and university was still undiscovered when the reforms of 1904 had been worked out to their conclusion'; that the foundation of a sound university organization had not yet been laid; and that 'the problems of high school training and organization were unresolved'.

The Sadler Commission issued in 1919 a voluminous Report and made more than one hundred detailed recommendations, and in 1920 the Government of India commended them generally to provincial Governments. The *Government of India Act* (1919) was now coming into

¹ Ronaldshay, *Curzon*, ii. 193-4.

operation, and in 1921 the responsibility for education in the Governors' Provinces was, under that Act, transferred to ministers responsible to the Local Legislatures. The pivotal principle of the Sadler Report was that the old type of Indian University, pre-eminently represented by the Calcutta University, with its large number of affiliated and widely scattered colleges, should be replaced by centralized, unitary, residential, teaching autonomous bodies. To a limited extent this principle has been adopted. Of the seventeen universities in India, eight have been established since 1920 (in addition to three new ones founded between 1916 and 1918). Of the whole number, seven are 'more or less unitary', but the total number of students in them is less than half the number in Calcutta University alone. The Sadler Commission also recommended that intermediate colleges should be established, on the one hand to prepare students for the universities, and to relieve the latter of a large number of students quite below any university standard; on the other hand to offer a sound collegiate education to students who did not propose, and should not be encouraged, to proceed to universities. The Simon Commission reported that 'the low age and low standard of matriculation and admission to some universities bring into them at present numbers of young and very immature students who are quite incapable of profiting by real university education and who in Europe would still be treated as schoolboys. Some experiments', they add, 'have been made to meet this obvious mischief', but the force of the opposition which wrecked the Curzon reforms has, it would seem, not sensibly abated.

Inside the universities the Simon Commission note some improvement (since the Sadler Report) in respect of the development of tutorial instruction, the equipment of libraries and laboratories, in honours, post-graduate and research work, and observe that the value of social activities, of corporate life, and of residential hostels as contributing thereto, are more appreciated; but the fundamental vices revealed by previous investigations remain

for the most part uncorrected. Standards of admission are still in some universities 'deplorably low'; the universities are overcrowded with men who 'are not profiting either intellectually or materially by their university training'; many, too easily admitted, fall by the way, having wasted precious years of youth; many succeed in obtaining the coveted B.A. degree only to find that the careers for which alone it fits them are hopelessly clogged and congested. The disastrous political results of the disease of unemployment among these half-educated and disillusioned youths are the commonplace of every commentator on Indian affairs. But while diagnosis is easy, curative treatment as Viceroy after Viceroy, Commission after Commission, have discovered, is exceptionally difficult. Evidently the whole system of education is top-heavy, and the first need is a readjustment of the balance as between the universities and colleges, on the one hand, and secondary, technical, and primary schools on the other. The second is an improvement in the quality and an increase in the number of inspectors. This need has been intensified by the provincialization of the educational service and by 'the progressive extinction of the Indian Educational Service'. The closing down of recruitment for the latter service, accompanied by 'the failure to reconstitute the provincial service (after a period of nearly five years) has', as the Simon Commission pointed out, 'been disastrous to the organization of Indian education'.

Alike in higher, secondary, and primary education there is much, then, that calls for the immediate attention of Governments, Central and Provincial. To the Western mind it is little less than appalling to learn that out of some 320 million people in all India (including the Indian States and Burma) 296 millions are illiterate; that they cannot even (for such is the low test of literacy) write a letter to a friend and read the answer in the vernacular; while there were (in 1921), despite all the development of English education, only 2½ million people who were able to read and write a simple letter in English. In some Provinces the

principle of compulsion has been adopted, but the application of it is left to local option, and in fact, when adopted, it is rarely enforced—even for boys. For girls, of whom only 2 per cent. are literate, compulsion has nowhere been adopted, nor, in the existing state of public opinion, is there any likelihood that it will be.

Such is the present position in regard to this problem of problems. Can it be matter for surprise that it should be viewed with grave apprehension by all who are concerned for the future of the British Empire in India, and in particular by a Commission charged with the duty of 'inquiring into the working of the system of government, the growth of education, and the development of representative institutions in British India', and with the further and still heavier responsibility of reporting 'whether and how far it is desirable to establish, extend, modify or restrict the principle of responsible government therein'?

As for education the responsibility has already been almost entirely shifted on to the shoulders of the Indians themselves. We in this country were slow enough in facing up to the problem of teaching our masters to read and write; we have not yet awakened fully to the duty of teaching them to think. Unless and until the latter duty is accepted, and can be fulfilled, it were safer perhaps to neglect the former. 'Elementary instruction,' as Sir Richard Jebb said many years ago, 'unless crowned by something higher is not only barren but may even be dangerous. It is not well to teach our democracy to read, unless we also teach it to think.' Literacy is no real test of thinking; there is indeed a large amount of concurrent testimony to prove that even a B.A. degree does not necessarily involve that painful process. Yet to the Western mind the idea of establishing representative institutions, much more responsible Government, among a people who, for the most part, can distinguish one candidate from another only by pictorial signs, seems not so much crazy as grotesque. Yet the English language was the spontaneous gift of the English people to British India. Admission to the rich heritage

of English literature was followed by repeated assurances that the British Parliament and the British Crown desired nothing so much as the admission of Indians to the public services. Those assurances were followed in turn by a series of measures conceding larger and larger powers of self-government. To an enumeration of those measures we must presently turn. Meanwhile, it has seemed relevant to examine in some detail the various aspects of a problem on the solution of which the success of any measure of autonomy must unquestionably depend.

XIV

CONSTITUTIONAL EVOLUTION (1858-1909)

THE more important stages in the constitutional evolution of the English East India Company have been indicated in preceding chapters. But the transference of British India to the Crown marks the opening of an entirely new era. It may, therefore, be convenient to summarize the preceding stages before proceeding to sketch the progress of evolution since 1858.

Under the original Charter granted by Queen Elizabeth the Court of the East India Company was authorized to 'make, ordain and constitute . . . reasonable laws, constitutions, orders and ordinances' and 'to impose pains, punishments, and penalties' provided such laws and penalties were not repugnant to the laws of England. The Charter of George I (1726) conferred upon the Governors-in-Council of the three Presidencies power to make by-laws and ordinances for the persons within their several jurisdictions. By virtue of the authority conferred by the grant of the Diwanni (1765) the Government of Bengal set up Courts for judicial and revenue purposes, and thus introduced a dual system of Courts, half deriving authority from the British Crown, half from the Great Mogul—a duality which was not finally simplified until 1861. The Charters.

The *Regulating Act* of 1773 subordinated the Governments of Madras and Bombay to that of Bengal, and the minor Presidencies were required to transmit to the Governor-General and Council 'advice and intelligence of all transactions and matters relating to the Government, revenues or interest of the Company'. But the same Act gave to a newly constituted Supreme Court a right of veto upon the legislation of the Governor-General-in-Council. This veto Warren Hastings ignored, and an *Amending Act* (1781) justified his action, and emancipated the Governor-General from the control, actually ambiguous and potentially mischievous, of the Court. Act of 1773.

Act of 1784. Pitt's *India Act* (1784) introduced what was known as 'double government'—the dual control of a Government Department and the Court of Directors. Though the machinery was cumbrous, and the procedure dilatory, the system worked, thanks largely to the absence of telegraphic communication between London and Calcutta, much better than might have been expected. But the Act also affected the governing bodies in India. The membership of the Governor-General's and the Presidency Councils was reduced to three, of whom the Commander-in-Chief was to be one and to have precedence next to the Governor. All appointments to these offices were to be in the hands of the Court of Directors. The control of the Governor-General over the minor Presidencies was strengthened; but this was not enough for Lord Cornwallis, who accepted office only on condition that he was empowered, in special cases, to override his Council. An Act to that effect was passed in 1786 and the same Act enabled the offices of Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief to be held by the same person. Even these powers Cornwallis found insufficient and they were further enlarged in 1791.

Charter Act, 1813. Extended powers were conferred upon the three Presidency Councils by the *Charter Act* of 1813, but great was the confusion thus engendered. The legal and judicial system of the country now

'rested on no less than five bodies of Statute Law, besides having to pay heed also to the English common law, Hindu and Mohammedan law and usage, charters, and letters patent, regulations authorized by statute or deriving their validity either from the Company's general powers of government or from their acquired rights as successors to native governments, circular orders of courts, and treaties made by the Crown or the Indian Government.'¹

Neither judges nor suitors knew where they stood.

Charter Act, 1833. The *Charter Act* of 1833 attempted to diminish the confusion on the one hand by depriving the minor Presidencies of all power of legislation and vesting it exclusively in the

¹ Montagu-Chelmsford Report, p. 49.

Governor-General-in-Council, on the other by establishing an Indian Law Commission charged with the task of regulating the Courts and codifying the law. The Governments of Madras and Bombay resented the concentration of legislative power at Calcutta, and accordingly the Act of 1853 strengthened the Governor-General's Council by the addition of 'legislative members' representing the local Governments. When acting in a legislative capacity the Council was to include, in addition to the Governor-General, the Commander-in-Chief and the four 'ordinary' members, the Chief Justices of Bengal and a puisne judge of the Calcutta Supreme Court, and four representatives appointed by the local Governments of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, and the North-West Provinces. This evidently marks the recognition of two new principles of great significance. On the one hand, legislation was 'for the first time treated as a special function of government requiring special machinery and special processes'. On the other hand, we have the germ of local representation in a central legislature.¹ The sittings of the Legislative Council were to be public and its proceedings officially published.

The Mutiny brought the old system of government to an end, and the transference of British India to the Crown was followed by a series of measures which, in the aggregate, by their progressive and cumulative effect, have gone far to transfer political responsibility from the Imperial Crown and Parliament to the Indian peoples.

Of these measures the first was the *Indian Councils Act of 1861*. That Act modified the composition of the Governor-General's Executive Council and entirely remodelled the legislative system of British India. A fifth 'ordinary' member was added to the Council, and of the five members three were required to have served for ten years in India under the Company or the Crown, and one was to be a barrister of five years' standing.² For purposes of legislation the Council was reinforced by the addition of not less than six

¹ M/C. Report, p. 30.

² Power to appoint a sixth member was given later.

or more than twelve members, to be nominated by the Governor-General for a term of two years. Not less than half the 'additional' members were to be non-official. The assent of the Governor-General was required to every Act passed by the Council, and all such Acts were subject to disallowance by the Crown. No Bills relating to finance, defence, or foreign affairs could be introduced without the previous sanction of the Governor-General. Power was also given to the Governor-General to issue Ordinances in cases of emergency, but they were not to remain in force for more than six months. In view of the growing tendency to general debate and criticism of the Executive, the functions of the new Legislative Council were strictly limited to legislation, and discussion relevant thereto. In Council, decisions were reached by a majority vote, though the Governor-General had, under exceptional circumstances, the power to overrule them.

Since 1861 Executive business has been more and more departmentalized, each of the chief departments, such as Finance and Education, being placed under the special direction of a member of Council, assisted by one of the secretaries to the Government of India. The Governor-General himself retains immediate control of Foreign Affairs. The Council is sometimes spoken of as a 'Cabinet'; but although there are certain obvious analogies between the Viceroy's Council and an English Cabinet (as e.g. the association of a member of Council and a 'Permanent' Secretary in each department), the description is misleading. The Council lacks the peculiar and distinctive characteristic of an English Cabinet in that it is not dependent upon or responsible to an elected Legislature. Such 'responsibility', it is needless to add, is one of the objects at which the Congress Party are now (1931) aiming. Meanwhile, the Executive Council more closely resembles the Cabinet of an American President, though again the analogy is by no means exact.

Presi-
dency
Councils. The Act of 1861 restored the right of legislation to the Councils. Similarly reinforced by additional members of

Madras and Bombay, it directed the Governor-General to establish by proclamation a Legislative Council for Bengal, and gave him power to establish such Councils elsewhere. Thus Bengal obtained a Council in 1862, the North-West Provinces and Oudh in 1886, the Punjab in 1897, and Burma and various other provinces in due course.

The year 1861 was further memorable, in a constitutional sense, for the passing of the *Indian High Courts Act*, which abolished the old *Sadr Adalat* (Courts generally inherited by the Company from their native predecessors) and set up new High Courts of Judicature in Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. Each Court was to consist of a Chief Justice and not more than fifteen judges, of whom at least one-third were to be barristers, and at least one-third to be covenanted Civil Servants. All the judges were to be appointed by, and hold office at the pleasure of, the Crown.

In the sphere of central government there is no important development to record between the measure of 1861 and the legislation devised by Lord Dufferin, and carried into effect by Lord Lansdowne as Viceroy, and Lord Cross (as Secretary of State), in 1892. The viceroyalty of Lord Ripon (1880-4) was, however, memorable both for what he achieved in the sphere of local government, and still more for the agitation aroused by proposals which he failed to carry. Lord Ripon was the nominee of Mr. Gladstone, and was in closer sympathy with the views of the Prime Minister than with the less sentimental views of his immediate chiefs at the India Office, Lord Hartington and Lord Kimberley. The Viceroy, himself an amiable but commonplace politician, was largely influenced in his policy by the legal member of Council, Mr. (afterwards Sir Courtenay) Ilbert, a scholar and jurist of great distinction, but belonging to the same radical doctrinaire type as Macaulay. The first important act of the new régime (apart from the reversal of the Afghan policy of Lord Lytton) was to carry out the intentions of Sir John Lawrence by restoring Mysore (the administration of which had been taken over by Lord William Bentinck

The Judiciary.

Lord Ripon's Vice-royalty.

in 1831) to the young Maharajah, the former Prince's adopted son, who had been carefully trained for his duties under British supervision. The next, and much more questionable act was the repeal of the *Vernacular Press Act*, which had been passed in 1868 to curb the seditious and anarchical tendencies of some portions of the native press. As a fact, the Act was only once invoked during its four years' currency. Not that that affords evidence that it had not fulfilled a useful purpose. Perhaps the contrary. Any way the Act repealed by Lord Ripon in 1882 was, substantially, though in more stringent form, re-enacted during the World War.

Local
Govern-
ment.

More permanently important was Lord Ripon's reform of local government. A full generation of Indians had by this time enjoyed the advantages of a 'Western' education; not a few Indian gentlemen had studied the working of English political institutions at first hand; many of them had imbibed the political philosophy of Mill, and had come to share the Englishman's conviction that 'liberty' was inseparable from parliamentary government. Indians were, as we have seen, seeking and finding employment in the Public Services, and at the Bar, and had been promoted to the Bench. Among these English-educated Indians there was generated a not unnatural ambition to obtain for the people of their own races a larger measure of self-government. With this ambition Lord Ripon and Mr. Ilbert were in complete sympathy. But they wisely began with local government. Between 1883 and 1885 a series of Acts was passed to establish District Boards, and subordinate bodies, and to extend the powers of municipal corporations. So far as possible an elective and non-official element was to be introduced. The Government of India wisely refrained from any attempt to impose uniformity in local administration; wide discretionary powers were conferred upon the local authorities in order that they might apply the general principle with some regard to local conditions and necessities. Lord Ripon was under no illusions as to the probable effect of his reforms. 'It is not', he confessed, 'primarily

with a view to improvements in administration that this measure is brought forward. It is chiefly desirable as a measure of political and popular education.'

Both in India and at home these measures were regarded with some suspicion and not a little apprehension; but the opposition to them was negligible compared with that aroused by a Bill, generally known as the Ilbert Bill, which proposed to remove from the Code of Criminal Procedure 'at once and completely every judicial disqualification based merely on race distinctions'. It is now generally acknowledged that the judicial faculty is far more common than executive competence among Hindus; but racial feelings were bitterly aroused, especially among the indigo and tea planters and other non-official classes in India, by the suggestion that Europeans should be put at the mercy of native judges. Racial prejudices on one side embittered those on the other, and in face of the agitation which sprang up, the Government withdrew the Bill. A compromise was finally reached in 1884 by which Europeans charged before a District Magistrate or Sessions Judge might claim a mixed jury, not less than half the members of which were to be Europeans or Americans. Other similar privileges, denied to natives, were conceded to Europeans.

Amid the angry tumult which raged round the Ilbert Bill a far more important event was almost ignored, partly perhaps because, before it actually happened, Lord Ripon, widely mistrusted in England as a Radical and a Roman Catholic, but by Indians regarded as an 'angel', had been replaced by a Viceroy who enjoyed confidence and popularity, Lord Dufferin.

Indian
National
Congress.

In the first months of Lord Dufferin's viceroyalty there met for the first time at Bombay (December 1885) a National Congress representing the most advanced section of educated Indian opinion. How far the Congress was, or is, representative of any class except that to which we had ourselves given a quasi-national character by the common use of the English tongue, it is difficult to say. Certain it

is, however, that from its first meeting in 1885 down to the present day, the Congress has gathered a rapidly increasing number of adherents, who with ever-increasing vehemence have demanded the concession of a Constitution framed on the model of Western democracy, with a representative and elected Legislature and an Executive responsible thereto. The full programme was not at first so precisely formulated, but it very soon became evident that this was the ultimate goal of the Congress party.

Lord Dufferin, while determined to suppress incendiary agitation, declared himself in favour of giving 'a wider share in the administration of public affairs to such Indian gentlemen as by their influence, their acquirements, and the confidence they inspire in their fellow countrymen are marked out as fitted to assist with their counsels the responsible rulers of the country'. He expressly disclaimed any idea of establishing a parliamentary system for British India. He described his scheme as 'a plan for the enlargement of our provincial councils, for the enhancement of their status, the multiplication of their functions, the partial introduction into them of the elective principle and the liberalization of their general character as political institutions'. But the elective element must always remain in a minority and the paramount control of policy always be left in the hands of each provincial government.

Indian Councils Act, 1892. These principles were frankly though cautiously applied in the Act of 1892. The Legislative Councils, both imperial and provincial, were by that measure considerably enlarged. In the Imperial Council the additional members were to number not fewer than ten, or more than sixteen; not more than six were to be officials, and the Governor-General-in-Council was empowered to make such regulations as would secure representation to various interests and classes. These regulations provided for the appointment of ten non-official members from the four provincial Councils and one selected by the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce, while five were nominated by the Governor-General. The Legislative Councils of Madras and Bombay

were each enlarged by twenty additional members, and of these not more than nine were to be officials. The non-official members were nominated by District Boards, Universities, Municipalities, and various associations, professional, commercial, and territorial. An official majority was still retained, but as regards the unofficial minority the principle of election was virtually admitted, though the term itself was carefully avoided.

Not less noteworthy than the enlargement of the Councils and the extension of their representative character, was the widening of their functions. An annual budget was to be laid before them and they were entrusted with the right of discussing, though not of voting upon it. The right of interpellating the Executive members, denied to the Councils in 1861, was now conferred upon them.

The advance thus registered was substantial; but it failed, of course, to satisfy the more ardent spirits in the Congress party, who maintained a more or less continuous agitation until larger, though still cautious, concessions were embodied in the Morley-Minto reform of 1909. 'A wave of political unrest', to use Lord Morley's own words, was indeed slowly sweeping over India. 'Revolutionary voices, some moderate, others extreme, grew articulate and shrill, and claims or aspirations for extending the share of the people in their own government took more organized shape'.¹

'Political unrest' is one of those political euphemisms under which is concealed a multitude of ambiguities. For nearly half a century the British Raj has been confronted with an agitation whose precise character is not easily determined. Were India a 'nation', it would be accurate to describe it as a 'national' movement, and that there is in it an element of nationalism it were mere affectation to deny. Yet it is equally true and pertinent to observe that any element of 'nationalism' which it possesses must be ascribed wholly to the policy consistently pursued by Great Britain in the government of India.

¹ Morley, *Recollections*, ii. 149.

Lord Dalhousie was not the first nor the last of British pro-consuls to contribute towards the 'making of a nation'. The whole tendency of British rule has been towards unification—moral, material, and political. Hand in hand with the process of unification has gone a policy of political evolution—the introduction into India of the political institutions familiar to Englishmen in their European home. More and more of political responsibility has been devolved upon the shoulders of Indians. The policy deliberately adopted has been embodied in Acts of Parliament, and has been repeatedly recommended in Official Proclamations; not least emphatically in those directly addressed to the Princes and Peoples of India by successive British sovereigns.

Educa- In the process of unification and of political education
tion. the 'English' education initiated by Macaulay's famous Minute has been a factor of momentous importance. Save for the *lingua franca* provided by the English language, to say nothing of the political ideas to which it is an avenue, there could be no semblance of an Indian 'nationality' to-day. True, that tongue is spoken by only about 2½ millions out of the 350 millions of the Indian peoples, but it is these people who form the politically-minded intelligentsia and supply the leaders of the nationalist movement. English has not only provided a common language to those who otherwise would still have been confined to a tower of Babel, it has also furnished them with the smatterings of a political philosophy, wholly Western in origin and content.

Par On the intellectual foundations laid by Macaulay, Lord
Britan- Dalhousie and his successors built their material super-
mica. structure of railways, postal and telegraphic communica-
tions, and so forth. Lord Lawrence was thought to have performed a wonderful feat when he accomplished the journey from Calcutta to Delhi in a fortnight. To-day he could perform it in two days by train, in a few hours by air. But means of communication would be as futile as the possession of a common language had not the British

Raj imposed on India—not only on British India—a *Pax Britannica*, and given to Indians rights of free speech and free meeting as ample as those enjoyed by Englishmen at home. All this is freely acknowledged by all responsible Indian politicians, and it was especially emphasized in the remarkable speech addressed to the second session of the Indian National Congress (Calcutta, 1886) by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the veteran Parsee who was the first Indian to sit in the House of Commons.

'I ask', he said, 'whether, in the most glorious days of Hindu rule you could imagine the possibility of a meeting of this kind, whether even Hindus of all different provinces of the kingdom could have collected and spoken as one nation. . . . It is under the civilizing rule of the Queen and people of England that we meet here together, hindered by none and allowed to speak our minds without the least fear and the least hesitation. Such a thing is possible under British rule and British rule only. . . . We are thoroughly sensible of the numberless blessings conferred upon us, of which the very existence of this Congress is a proof in a nutshell. Were it not for those blessings of British rule I could not have come here to-day . . . without the least fear that my children might be robbed and killed in my absence; nor could you have come from every corner of the land . . .'¹

Mr. Naoroji spoke no more than the literal truth, and his words deserve to be recalled to-day. Sir Charles Dilke was not less accurate when he said that 'the hardest thing that can be said of [British rule in India] is that it is too good'.²

British rule has been, in a sense, 'too good'. It has incurred the inevitable nemesis of gratuitous and somewhat doctrinaire benevolence. But it is relevant to present issues to recall the fact that the policy was deliberately designed to educate the Dependencies for independence. The mid-Victorian statesmen had that goal constantly in view. The most representative work of the Manchester School was Sir George Cornwall Lewis's *Government of*

¹ Quoted by Chirol, *India*, p. 90.

² *Greater Britain*, li. 375.

Dependencies (1841), and its doctrine or gospel is there set forth as follows: 'If a dominant country understood the true nature of the advantages arising from the supremacy and dependence of the related communities, it would voluntarily recognize the legal independence of such of its own dependencies as were fit for independence' (p. 324). Education 'for present self-government and eventual independence is now', wrote Arthur Mills in 1856, 'the universally admitted aim of our Colonial policy'. India is not, and never could be, a British 'colony'; but the doctrines which inspired the policy of the Colonial Office were not without their influence on the India Office, though their application would evidently have to be much more gradual in an Asiatic Dependency than in a British Colony.

After the close of the 'sixties the Manchester School ceased to dominate English politics. It was killed by the triumph of nationalism in Europe and by the revival of high 'Protection'. The pacific hopes of those who organized International Exhibitions, who looked to the development of international trade to banish war from the earth, were rudely dissipated by a series of 'nationalistic' wars and by the advent of *welt-politik*. The nations, old and new, began to scramble and struggle for a place in the tropical sun. In the course of that struggle Europeans came into not infrequent conflict with coloured peoples, and from those conflicts they did not always emerge victorious.

The reverses suffered by the Italians in Abyssinia in 1887 and 1893 caused some excitement in the Indian bazaars. The defeats inflicted upon British forces in the earlier stages of the South African War caused much more. If a handful of Dutch farmers, 'rightly struggling to be free', could thus defy the Imperial might of Britain, what might not be achieved by 250 millions of people in India? But far the most important of all such events was the defeat of Russia at the hands of Japan (1904-5). On this point all contemporary testimony concurs. There could, indeed, be no greater contrast than that presented by

Japan and India. Nevertheless, as a writer in the *Quarterly Review* (July 1908) pertinently observed: 'the story of the triumph of Japan smote upon the receptive and impressionable minds of the new generation in India like an alluring trumpet call'. It did. The repercussion of that momentous war was felt throughout the whole continent of Asia, and, indeed, in all parts of the world where coloured races were in contact with whites. Most of all was it felt in India where the Japanese victory was craftily represented as a blow to the prestige not of Russia only, but of all the Western peoples, not excepting, of course, the English.

The Russo-Japanese War coincided with the closing year of Lord Curzon's viceroyalty. Well had it been for that great statesman's reputation, and for English prestige in India, had he resisted the temptation to return to India for a second term of office. He returned under no illusions, but under a stern sense of duty: 'I was well aware that a severe struggle lay ahead of me.' It did. He was cordially welcomed on his return by Princes and peasants; but quite otherwise by the self-conscious intelligentsia in Bengal. 'The implications which underlay his educational policy were regarded as reflecting on Bengali character; while his scheme for the partition of the Province was interpreted as a contemptuous challenge to their national aspirations'.¹ The partition policy was, in truth, nothing of the sort; it may have been unimaginative, but it was dictated solely by considerations of administrative convenience and efficiency. Unfortunately, those considerations made no appeal to the Bengali politicians, and the policy was, in deference to persistent and passionate agitation, reversed in 1911. Bihar and Orissa were, indeed, created into a new Province, thus to some extent relieving, as Lord Curzon desired, the overworked Government of Bengal, but Eastern Bengal, with its preponderance of Mohammedans, was once more placed under the heel of Calcutta.

More potent as a stimulus to agitation than the policy initiated by Lord Curzon were the circumstances of his

Lord
Curzon's
policy
and resig-
nation.

¹ Ronaldshay, *Life*, ii. 360-2.

resignation. Not less just than generous was Lord Morley's tribute when he declared that never would there be 'a Viceroy his superior, if indeed his equal, in force of mind, in passionate and devoted interest in all that concerns the well-being of India, with an imagination fired by the grandeur of the political problem that India presents.' True. But this was the Viceroy who was thrown over by a Government of his own friends at home, and virtually compelled to resign under circumstances deeply galling to his pride. Whether he was right in thinking that to combine in one person the offices of Commander-in-Chief and Military Member of Council involved an undue subordination of the civil to the military power; whether Lord Kitchener, as Commander-in-Chief, was right in insisting upon the combination; and whether the India Office were right in supporting the soldier against the Viceroy—these are matters on which a layman may hesitate to pronounce an opinion. What is certain is that the supersession of Lord Curzon, the strongest and proudest of recent Viceroys, dealt a terrible blow at the prestige of his high office, and sensibly diminished the respect due to the King-Emperor whom he represented.

Radical Government in England. Hardly had Lord Curzon been succeeded as Viceroy by Lord Minto, when his political friends in England were routed at the polls, and the Radical Party, after a political exile of twenty years,¹ returned to power. The advent of a Radical ministry with Lord Morley, a staunch Home Ruler, at the India Office, gave fresh hope to the 'nationalists' in India. A religious revival among the Hindus stimulated and sanctified preparations for armed insurrection. A campaign of violence and assassination was launched, and many innocent victims paid with their lives for the weak benevolence of the new régime. In 1907 the Congress pronounced in favour of what has come to be known as 'Dominion status'—interpreted in India as 'national autonomy within the British Commonwealth of Nations'. Meanwhile, neither the visit in the winter of 1905-6 of the

¹ Broken only by a troubled spell of office, 1892-5.

then Prince and Princess of Wales, who were received with immense enthusiasm, nor the fact that the new Viceroy and the new Secretary of State were known to be contemplating a further instalment of constitutional reform, seriously interrupted the campaign of violence. To get rid of the foreign government by any means effectual for the purpose was inculcated as a religious duty. Bomb outrages and assassinations were reported from different parts of India though they were most frequent in Bengal. In December 1907 the train in which the Lieutenant-Governor was travelling was derailed by a bomb; in May 1908 two English ladies were killed by a bomb intended for a District magistrate; later in the same year a District officer, Mr. Jackson, was murdered in Bombay, and the trial of his assassins revealed the existence of a Brahmin secret society with wide ramifications. There was serious rioting also in the Punjab.

The Government was seriously alarmed. In 1907 legislation was passed on the lines familiar in Irish 'Coercion' Acts. Local Governments were empowered to proclaim certain districts with a view to the stricter control of public meetings, and to deport offenders. These precautions were followed in 1908 by Acts making it a felony to manufacture or to be in possession of explosives, or to incite to murder in the press, while a third Act, passed at a single sitting of the Legislative Council, conferred upon the courts in cases of seditious violence summary jurisdiction. In the same year Bal Gangadhar Tilak, a Poona Brahman, who stood forth as the leader of the extremists, openly justified the weapon of assassination, and invoked blessings on the heads of the murderers, was tried and sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

Such was the atmosphere in which the constitutional reforms known as the Morley-Minto reforms were launched.

Meanwhile, on 2 November 1908, being the fiftieth anniversary of the assumption of the government of India by the Crown, the King-Emperor took the opportunity of addressing to the Princes and Peoples of India a Pro-

Procla-
mation of
King Ed-
ward VII.

clamation. The Royal message was read by the Governor-General at a Grand Durbar in Rajputana.

The King-Emperor, looking back on the 'labours of the past half-century with clear gaze and good conscience', noted the splendid fight against the 'calamities of Nature', drought and plague; the wonderful material advance that India had made; the impartial administration of law; and the unswerving loyalty of the Feudatory Princes and Ruling Chiefs whose 'rights and privileges have been respected, preserved, and guarded'. He referred to the paramount duty of repressing 'with a stern arm guilty conspiracies that have no just cause and no serious aim' and are abhorrent to the great mass of the Indian peoples, and declared that such conspiracies would not be suffered to interrupt the task of 'building up the fabric of security and order'. 'Steps', he added, 'are being continuously taken towards obliterating distinctions of race as the test for access to posts of public authority', and he then announced that further measures towards the same end were in preparation. The most notable passage of the Proclamation ran as follows:

'From the first the principle of representative institutions began to be gradually introduced, and the time has come when . . . that principle may be prudently extended. Important classes among you, representing ideas that have been fostered and encouraged by British rule, claim equality of citizenship, and a greater share in legislation and government. The politic satisfaction of such a claim will strengthen, not impair, existing authority and power. Administration will be all the more efficient, if the officers who conduct it have greater opportunities of contact with those whom it affects and with those who influence and reflect common opinion about it.'

The message itself, we learn, 'was much approved in Bombay and Madras; Bengal pronounced it disappointing and wholly unworthy of the occasion.' Extremist rags were frankly abusive of 'words meant to cheat men as if they were children'.²

¹ The Proclamation is printed in full in an Appendix to Lord Morley's *Recollections*, vol. ii.

² Morley, *Recollections*, ii. 276.

Neither by praise nor criticism of his rhetorical exercise was Lord Morley diverted from the main path of his Indian policy. The measures taken by the Government of India for the repression of crime had his full approval. 'You must', as he truly observed, 'protect the lives of your officers. You must protect peaceful and harmless people both Indian and European from the bloodstained havoc of anarchic conspiracy.' But he was determined that the necessity for applying 'Coercion' in fields far removed from Ireland should not delay ameliorative reform. Lord Minto was in complete accord with him, and after three years of gestation and correspondence his proposals were outlined to the House of Lords on 17 December 1908, and were embodied in a Bill, the second reading of which he moved on 23 February 1909.¹

Lord Morley disclaimed with emphasis any idea of attempting to set up parliamentary government in India: *Indian Councils Act, 1909*. 'If it could be said that this chapter of reforms led directly or necessarily up to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India I for one would have nothing at all to do with it.'

Under the Act and the Regulations made under its authority: (i) All the Legislative Councils, both Central and Provincial, were increased in numbers: the Viceroy's Council was enlarged from 16 members to 60; the Councils of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay from 20 to 50; the Council of the United Provinces from 15 to 50. (ii) The principle of election was introduced alongside that of nomination. Henceforth every Council was to be composed of three classes of members: (a) nominated official members; (b) nominated non-official members; (c) elected members. In the Provincial Councils the elected members were to be retained, partly on a locality basis by municipalities and district and local boards, but mainly on a vocational basis by Universities, Chambers of Commerce, trade associations, and groups of persons with common interests

¹ The two speeches may be read in Morley's *Indian Speeches*, pp. 75-97, and 113-32.

such as landholders and tea-planters. The 25 elected members of the Viceroy's Council were also elected indirectly, mostly by the Provincial Councils. Separate representation was also guaranteed to Mohammedans. (iii) The Viceroy's Council retained an official majority; on the Provincial Councils the majority was unofficial, but not necessarily elected. (iv) Not only the size but the functions of the Councils were enlarged. They were invested with power to move, and to vote on, resolutions, not only on the budget, but on any matter of general public interest; but the Executive Government was not bound to act on such resolutions. The right to interpellate ministers was also extended by permission to put supplementary questions. (v) As regards the Executive Councils the maximum number of ordinary members in Madras and Bombay was raised from two to four, of whom two at least must have been in the service of the Crown in India for at least twelve years. In 1910 the Secretary of State appointed a Hindu barrister, Mr. (afterwards Lord) Sinha, as legal member of the Viceroy's Council, and, on his resignation, a Mohammedan gentleman, Mr. Syed Ali Imam. Two Indian gentlemen had in 1907 been appointed members of the Council of India, to the great advantage, as Lord Morley declared, of the Secretary of State.

Lord Morley claimed for his measures that they marked the 'opening of a very important chapter in the history of Great Britain and India'. Perhaps; but Lord Curzon gave expression to doubts which the experience of the last two decades has not dispelled:

'I wonder', he said, 'how these changes will, in the last resort, affect the great mass of the people who have no vote and who have scarcely a voice. To these people, who form the bulk of the population of India, representative government and popular institutions mean nothing whatever. The good government which appeals to them is the government which protects them from the rapacious moneylender and landlord, and all the other sharks in human disguise which prey upon these unhappy people. I have a misgiving that this class will not fare much better under these changes than they do now.'

The misgiving, as we shall see, was only too fully justified; yet it was Lord Curzon who was largely if not primarily responsible for the much more extensive and more momentous changes announced in the historic declaration of August 1917 and effected by the *Government of India Act* of 1919.

How far the Morley-Minto reforms satisfied the Congress party and the great body of politically-minded Hindus must be considered presently. For the moment they were overshadowed by the visit of the King-Emperor and his Consort, and the dramatic announcements made by His Majesty at the Delhi Durbar of 1911.

Even with the wonderful example of Japan in mind, and not ignoring recent events in the Turkish Republic, it is still permissible to doubt whether the genius of the Oriental does not find more appropriate fulfilment in a Personal rather than in a Parliamentary régime. Be that as it may, it is undeniable that the 'talisman of the Royal Presence' (to use a once famous phrase of Goldwin Smith's) has never failed to evoke a wonderful response when it has been employed, as it has been employed with increasing frequency since India passed to the Crown. In the last sixty years India has welcomed three of the sons of Queen Victoria, her grandson, and great-grandson, as successive Princes of Wales; but all these visits paled, of course, in comparison with that of the actual wearer of the Royal and Imperial Crown. On 7 December 1911 their Majesties made their State entry into the capital of the Mogul Emperors and, on the 12th, with stately and superb ceremonial the great Coronation Durbar was held. The King-Emperor announced a series of administrative changes consequential upon the 'modification' of Lord Curzon's partition of Bengal; the creation of a Governor-in-Council for the freshly delimited Province of Bengal; a Lieutenant-Governorship for the new Province of Behar, Orissa, and Chota Nagpur, with a capital at Patna; and a Chief Commissionerhip for Assam. But these were matters of relatively small importance. Great was the sensation when

Royal
Visits.

the King-Emperor announced that the capital of the Indian Empire was presently to be transferred from Calcutta to Delhi, and that the supreme Government was to be established in a new city planned (and now built) on a scale of dazzling magnificence. As to the wisdom of the transference of the seat of government, opinion was and is sharply divided. Was the change due to the promptings of an historic imagination? Or to strategical considerations? Or to a desire to punish the seditious and anarchical Hindus of Bengal, and to gratify the more loyal Mohammedans? One thing at least was certain: the transference, wise or unwise, would impose immense financial burdens upon a none too opulent community.

Such considerations, however, were evoked by subsequent reflection. At the time the effect of the great ceremony was dazzling.

'That incomparable moment,' wrote an eyewitness of the scene,¹ 'when the Monarchs seated themselves upon their high thrones beneath a shining golden dome, in the midst of a hundred thousand of their acclaiming subjects, will assuredly remain in the eyes of those present as the most vivid memory of their lives. It was a majestic and moving rite fraught with deep emotion, compelling thought into unwonted channels. The greetings of the multitude set the seal upon the validity of the British Empire in the East.'

So an eyewitness of that superb pageant might well have thought and written. A retrospective glance over the years which followed the Delhi Durbar irresistibly suggests more sombre reflections. Yet mingling with them is one which to all time must recall one of the proudest moments in the long and splendid story of our race. Three years after the King-Emperor's Coronation Durbar, the whole Imperial fabric, of which he is the corner-stone, was shaken to its foundations by the shock of world-war. To the victory which ultimately crowned our efforts India made a superb and spontaneous contribution. Of that contribution nothing can ever efface the memory.

¹ Quoted *ap. Smith, Oxford History of India*, p. 782.

XV

THE PROBLEM OF DEFENCE

'IN Europe we are a maritime Power who are merely called upon to defend our shores from invasion. . . . In Asia we have both a seaboard and a land frontier many thousands of miles in length. . . . The safety of our Indian Frontier . . . no less than internal reform is part of England's duty. . . . India is like a fortress with the vast moat of the sea on two of her faces, and with mountains for her walls on the remainder. But beyond those walls, which are sometimes of by no means insuperable height and admit of being easily penetrable, extends a glacis of varying breadth and dimensions. We do not want to occupy it, but we also cannot afford to see it occupied by our foes. We are quite content to let it remain in the hands of our allies and friends; but if rival and unfriendly influences creep up to it, and lodge themselves right under our walls, we are compelled to intervene because a danger would thereby grow up that might one day menace our security. This is the secret of the whole position in Arabia, Persia, Afghanistan, and as far eastward as Siam.'¹

In these vivid sentences Lord Curzon accurately diagnosed the situation which confronts the British Empire in India. The problem of defence against external enemies is under all circumstances a vital problem. On its solution depends literally the life of a nation. Self-preservation is the primary law of the State. Preceding chapters of this book have been mainly devoted to questions of internal organization and constitutional readjustment. But in the absence of an assurance of external security the discussion of such topics would be the merest futility. The fortunate citizens of a State where public order is rarely disturbed, where no foreign invader has been seen for centuries,² may perhaps resent as disproportionate the space allotted by com-

¹ *Lord Curzon in India*, pp. 407-8.

² The French descents on the Irish and Welsh coasts during the Napoleonic wars and the Zeppelin attacks during the World-War ought perhaps to be noted as exceptions which prove the rule.

mentators on Indian affairs to questions of army organization and to problems of defence. But those problems are primary, and though they must be summarily treated, cannot be ignored.

Indian
Foreign
Policy.

The term 'Foreign Policy' has meant very different things at different periods in the history of British India. For a full century (1756-1856) it connoted the relations between the East India Company and the Indian States. In the half-century between 1838 and 1888 it meant primarily the relations between British India and Afghanistan, though before that period closed it was beginning to take serious account of the relations between Great Britain and other European Powers in Asia. This was, indeed, only one aspect of a larger problem. The era of national evolution in Europe was giving place in the last decades of the nineteenth century to an era dominated by *welt-politik*. European politics were ceasing to be exclusively European. Under the influence of new conditions imposed by discoveries in physical and mechanical science, the whole world was becoming one. The European chancelleries were concerned as much with the expansion of the European States in other continents, with the scramble for Africa, the acquisition of Pacific Islands, the competition for markets and territory in the tropics, as with their mutual relations on the European continent.

Diplo-
matic re-
volution.

This momentous change in the preoccupations of European diplomacy reacted powerfully upon Asia, and not least upon India.

'Our Indian dominions now directly touch those of Turkey in many parts of the Arabian peninsula, those of Russia on the Pamirs, those of China along the entire border of Turkestan and Yunnan, those of France on the Upper Mekong. In our dealings with them the Foreign Department in India [then, as always, under the immediate control of the Viceroy] is becoming the Asiatic branch of the Foreign Office in England.'

So Lord Curzon wrote in 1903, and he wrote with truth and wisdom, as well as with exceptional and first-hand knowledge.

In order to see in true perspective the dealings of the British Government in India with their immediate neighbours it is essential to apprehend a more remote consideration. Shortly before his death in 1852 the Duke of Wellington advised Lord Malmesbury, who succeeded in that year to the Foreign Office, to keep on friendly terms with France, but 'to mistrust the Emperor of Russia like a Greek of the Lower Empire'. Neither Lord Malmesbury nor any other statesman of that period, except perhaps Lord Aberdeen, was likely to ignore that advice. On the contrary, from the time of the Greek War of Independence (1822-9) until the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907, consistent mistrust of Russian ambition, fitful opposition to Russian advance, was the mainspring of British Foreign Policy, and determined the relations between British India and its neighbours.

Until the régime of Lord Auckland (1836-42) we had virtually no contact with other Asiatic States; but the broad result of the rapid expansion of the Company's dominions between the rule of Lord Wellesley and that of Lord Dalhousie was to eliminate buffer States, and to bring us into immediate contact with the hill-tribes of the Himalayas and with the loosely compacted and turbulent realm which acknowledged the authority of the Amir of Afghanistan—when, but only when, he was strong enough to enforce it.

To the tragic and humiliating circumstances attendant on our earlier attempts to interfere in the internal politics of Afghanistan reference has been already made. From the time when British India passed to the Crown (1858) down to the advent of Lord Lytton (1876) there was, except for the Umbeyla or Black Mountain Campaign (1862-3), and a little war with Bhutan, a small State on the Tibetan frontier, almost unbroken peace in India. To the end of his long life Dost Muhammad, the able Amir of Afghanistan, not only kept his own fretful realm in awe, but remained faithful to his treaty-engagements with the British, even to the point of resisting the temptation, afforded by the

Mutiny, to try and recover Peshawar. But his life and reign ended in 1863. On his death the usual wars of succession broke out between the survivors among his sixteen sons. Now one, now another, of his sons obtained a temporary ascendancy, now in Kabul, now in Kandahar, or again in Herat. The policy of Sir John Lawrence (Viceroy, 1864-9) was to abstain from interference in the domestic affairs of Afghanistan and to recognize any *de facto* ruler whichever and wherever he might be. This, under the circumstances, though an unheroic was probably the most prudent policy to adopt as regards the Amirs. But another complication supervened. Russia was now hovering on the northern frontiers of Afghanistan. The steady advance of Russia in Central Asia had for many years past caused considerable perturbation to the British Government. In the middle years of the century (1844-53) the Czar Nicholas I had, indeed, made more than one attempt, apparently sincere, to arrive at a friendly agreement with Great Britain in regard to their relations in Central Asia. His overtures were coldly received; the Crimean War ensued; and after the war Russia, denied by England and France access to the Mediterranean, again turned eastwards, and renewed her activities in Central Asia. The tendency at Calcutta in the early 'sixties was to regard those activities with a careless if not a benevolent eye. Lawrence, indeed, expressed the opinion that Russia 'might prove a safer neighbour than the wild tribes of Central Asia'. Consequently, the agents of the Czar were left free to fish in the troubled waters of Central Asian politics. Opportunities for that sport were not lacking: in 1864 Russian troops occupied Tashkent; four years later they captured Samarkand, the capital of the Khanate of Bokhara and at one time the capital of the famous empire of Tamerlane. After the capture of his capital the Khan of Bokhara ceded to Russia the whole province of Samarkand.

That acquisition brought Russian territory up to the northern frontier of Afghanistan, and on the eve of his

departure from India (1869) Lawrence addressed a Dispatch to the Secretary of State indicating, as it seemed, some weakening in his policy of 'masterly inactivity'. He suggested that we ought to have a 'clear understanding with the Court of Petersburg as to its projects and designs in Central Asia', and advised that Russia should be warned 'in firm and courteous language that it cannot be permitted to interfere in the affairs of Afghanistan or in those of any State which lies contiguous to our frontier'. Mr. Gladstone's Government, then in power, preferred Lawrence's earlier manner, and adhered to his former policy of *laissez-faire*.

Sher Ali, the most successful of Dost Muhammad's sons, had now established himself on his father's throne and did not view Russia's advance with the same philosophic detachment. He was, on the contrary, seriously alarmed. In 1873 the Russians occupied Khiva. At Khiva they were within 400 miles of the Indian Frontier. Accordingly, Sher Ali endeavoured to persuade Lord Northbrook (Viceroy, 1872-6) that 'the interests of the Afghan and English Governments are identical, and that the frontier of Afghanistan is in truth the frontier of India'. But the Gladstone Government could not be persuaded of the truth of this proposition, and Lord Northbrook was instructed to inform the Amir that the India Office did not share his alarm, but that we should 'maintain our settled policy in favour of Afghanistan if the Amir abides by our advice in external affairs'. Lord Northbrook obeyed his instructions to the letter. He had previously sent the Amir 20,000 rifles and a large present of money, but what the Amir wanted more than money or arms was an assurance that if he were attacked by Russia, England would defend him. That was withheld. Patronized by Whitehall, repulsed at Calcutta, Sher Ali threw in his lot with Russia.

In 1874 Mr. Disraeli displaced Mr. Gladstone, Lord Salisbury went to the India Office, and Lord Lytton, a son of the novelist, and himself a poet with a varied experience in the diplomatic service, was, to the general amazement of a public who had heard of 'Owen Meredith' but knew

Lord
Lytton,
1876-80.

nothing of Lord Lytton, appointed to succeed Lord Northbrook as Viceroy. Lord Lytton's administrative work in India was admirable; he carried through important financial reforms; his handling of the famine crisis of 1876-8—one of the worst on record—was recognized as masterly; and he presided with great dignity over the historic Durbar which was held on 1 January 1877 to proclaim the assumption by Queen Victoria of the new title of Empress of India, conferred upon her by the Bill, bitterly opposed on its passage into an Act, of 1876. The Viceroy cordially approved the Act as marking the inauguration of a 'new policy by virtue of which the Crown of England should henceforth be identified with the hopes, the aspirations, the sympathies, and interests of a powerful native aristocracy'. Denounced by the Manchester School in England as 'bizarre', as a characteristic bit of melodrama performed by a political charlatan, the Act fulfilled the hopes of its author. On Disraeli's part it was no sudden inspiration; it was merely an item in a coherent and pre-determined scheme of policy. 'You ought at once . . . to tell the people of India that the relation between them and their real ruler and Sovereign Queen Victoria shall be drawn nearer. . . . You can only act upon the opinion of Eastern nations through their imagination.' So Disraeli, then in opposition, had spoken at the time of the Mutiny. In 1876 he spoke as First Minister of the Crown as follows: 'The Princes and nations of India . . . know what this (the Royal Titles) Bill means, and they know that what it means they wish.' No one could better have interpreted the mind of the Prime Minister to the peoples of India than the Viceroy of his choice.

Kaiser-i-Hind. Unfortunately, however, it is in connexion with his Afghan policy that Lord Lytton's name as Viceroy has been almost exclusively associated. Lord Lytton's first move was to try and persuade Sher Ali to conclude a comprehensive treaty under which he was to obtain what he most desired, the recognition of his younger and favourite son, Abdulla Jan, as heir to his throne, a fixed and aug-

mented subsidy, and a definite pledge of English support against foreign aggression; while he, on his part, was to accept a British Resident at Herat. To the latter condition the Amir was strongly opposed, nor was he willing even to receive a complimentary mission to announce the Queen's assumption of the Imperial title. He objected that if he received an English mission he could not refuse a similar request from Russia. Whether Sher Ali was sincerely anxious to hold both his powerful neighbours equally at arm's length, or whether, repulsed by one Viceroy after another, he had already decided to throw in his lot with Russia, is not certain. Could the latter alternative be substantiated it would go far to justify the course subsequently adopted by Lord Lytton. Critical opinion has, unfortunately for Lytton's reputation, inclined to accept the former alternative, and consequently to endorse the condemnation pronounced by contemporaries.

Meanwhile, Lord Lytton had in December 1876 concluded with the Khan of Khelat in Baluchistan the important Treaty of Jacobabad, by which we acquired a right to garrison Quetta, a position of natural strength and strategical importance, since by giving us the command of the Bolan Pass it enabled us to turn the flank of the Afghan frontier. Quetta has since become an integral part of British India with which it has been connected by a railway. This diplomatic success, attained through the tact of Major Sandeman who negotiated the treaty, naturally alarmed the Amir, and served to strengthen his resolution against the reception of an English Resident.

In 1878, however, Sher Ali received, it may well be under compulsion, a Russian mission at Kabul. But whether under compulsion or not, its reception rendered it imperative, unless British prestige was to be irremediably damaged in Asia, that a British mission should be received with equal honour. Accordingly, Lord Lytton informed the Amir that a British envoy of high rank, General Sir Neville Chamberlain, at that time Commander of the Madras army, would forthwith proceed to Kabul.

The Chamberlain mission, with an escort of about 1,000 men, left Peshawar on 21 September and encamped at Jamrud, three miles short of the Khyber Pass. Sir Neville, having reason to suspect that the advance of the mission might be opposed, took the wise precaution of sending forward Major (afterwards Sir Louis) Cavagnari to demand leave for the mission to proceed. Leave was refused by the officer commanding the Afghan troops in the Khyber Pass; it was made clear to General Chamberlain that, if he proceeded, he would encounter armed resistance, and the mission was accordingly abandoned.

That Lord Lytton acted precipitately was generally acknowledged at the time. It is now known that he acted in flagrant disobedience to the orders of the Cabinet.

'He was told' (as Lord Beaconsfield wrote to Lord Cranbrook 26 September 1878) 'to wait until we had received the answer from Russia to our remonstrance. . . . He disobeyed us. . . . He was told to send the mission by Kandahar. He has sent it by the Khyber and received a snub which it may cost us much to wipe away.' 'If Lytton had only been quiet and obeyed my orders,' he wrote to Lord Salisbury (3 October), 'I have no doubt that, under the advice of Russia, Sher Ali would have been equally prudent.'¹

Lord Beaconsfield's words, written before the disasters occurred, constitute a much more conclusive condemnation of Lytton's precipitate conduct than anything that was subsequently said or done by Mr. Gladstone and Lord Hartington. The Beaconsfield Cabinet, however, refused to 'let down' the 'man on the spot', and their loyalty to a colleague cost them their places. The Afghan War, combined with their policy in South Africa, sealed their fate at the general election of 1880, and brought Mr. Gladstone back into power.

Lord Lytton's position was confessedly difficult. His real blunder was precipitancy. That he was right in insisting that Sher Ali should receive a British Mission cannot be denied. The Amir's refusal created a dangerous

¹ Buckle, *Disraeli*, vol. vi, chap. x, esp. pp. 380-90.

situation. Nothing, as General Chamberlain wrote to the Viceroy, 'could have been more humiliating to the dignity of the British Crown and nation'. To the refusal to receive an Envoy from the Queen-Empress, at a moment when a Russian mission was actually being entertained at Kabul, what answer could there have been save the one which the Viceroy actually gave?

An ultimatum, with a short time-limit, was sent to Sher Ali, demanding a full and immediate apology and a promise to receive a permanent British Embassy at Kabul. A large force was mobilized, and on the expiry of the time-limit, was ordered to march. Ten days later the Amir's reply was received; but the war had begun.

On 21 November the British force, 30,000 to 40,000 strong, advanced in three columns: one by the Khyber Pass, under the command of Sir Samuel Browne; another through the Kuram Valley, under Major-General Roberts; the third, under Sir Donald Stewart, through the Bolan Pass on Kandahar. Before the end of December Browne had reached Jalalabad, Roberts had fought his way through the Shutargardan Pass, and in January Stewart entered Kandahar. Sher Ali, realizing the hopelessness of resistance, fled into Turkestan, with such members of the Russian mission as lingered at Kabul, and there in February 1879, having vainly besought the Russians to deliver him from the misfortunes they had brought upon him, the unhappy victim of Russian ambition passed away. His eldest son, Yakub Khan, released from imprisonment before his father's flight, established himself in Kabul; in May he presented himself in General Browne's camp at Gandamak, and terms of peace were quickly arranged.

By the Treaty of Gandamak Yakub Khan agreed to receive a permanent British Embassy, with a suitable escort, at Kabul, and agencies at Herat and elsewhere; to conduct his foreign policy under the advice of Great Britain; to give facilities for trade, and to allow such a rectification of the North-Western frontier as was

Afghan
War,
1878-9.

Treaty of
Ganda-
mak,
26 May
1879.

demanding by the 'forward' school of British strategists. In return he was to be supported against external aggression and to receive an annual subsidy of six lacs of rupees.

The news of the conclusion of peace was received with much satisfaction in England, and the Government congratulated itself and the country on the attainment of 'a scientific and adequate frontier for our Indian Empire'. Lord Lawrence's warnings were ignored; the advocates of the 'forward' policy triumphed; the Indian frontier was to rest not upon the Indus, but upon the command of the passes. One of the great soldiers who had conducted the war had forebodings about the peace. General Roberts thought that 'peace had been signed too quickly', and that it ought to have been dictated in Kabul.¹

Murder of
Cavagnari in
Kabul. His forebodings were only too sadly justified. Sir Louis Cavagnari, whose diplomatic tact had done so much to smooth the negotiations at Gandamak, accepted the mission to Kabul. Taking with him only a small escort, he reached the capital in July 1879. In September he and all his comrades were murdered by the Amir's mutinous soldiery. The news reached Simla on 4 September, and two days later Roberts left to take command of the Kabul Field Force. Stewart's army had hardly left Kandahar, which was at once reoccupied. Roberts and his little force reached Kabul early in October. Yakub promptly abdicated and was deported to India. Efforts were made to discover Cavagnari's murderers, and the city and district around it were placed under martial law. Roberts found Kabul 'much more Russian than English, the officers arrayed in uniforms of Russian pattern, Russian money in the treasury, and Russian wares in the Bazaars'. Before he left, he brought to light much evidence as to Russian designs in Afghanistan, and he placed it on formal record that in his opinion the recent rupture with Sher Ali had 'been the means of unmasking and checking a very serious conspiracy against the peace and security of our Indian Empire'.²

¹ *Forty-one Years in India*, li. 177.

² Cf. dispatch dated 22 November 1879, printed in *Forty-one Years*, Appendix iv.

Meanwhile his own position in Kabul was far from secure. Again and again he had to beat off the tribesmen, and not until the end of December did reinforcements reach him from India. Early in May 1880, Stewart and his division, after a successful engagement at Ahmed Khel, near Ghazni, joined him at Kabul.

Before this, an important political decision had been arrived at. To retain Afghanistan was out of the question. How could it best be made to contribute to the tranquillity of the northern frontier of India? There were only two alternatives. To erect Afghanistan into a strong, united, and friendly buffer State; or to break it up and so render it impotent for mischief. Could the friendship of the tribesmen or of their ruler be really assured, the former was the obvious policy. But the tribesmen were hostile, and a ruler was still to seek. Lord Lytton decided therefore on the policy of disintegration. Kandahar or Western Afghanistan was promised to Sher Ali, a cousin of the late Amir, but Sher Ali declared, truly enough, that he could hold it only with the help of British troops. Northern Afghanistan was still unprovided for. Opportunely at this moment there appeared upon the scene the strong man so badly needed. Abdur Rahman, a grandson of Dost Muhammad, and a nephew of Sher Ali, had been, for nearly ten years, a semi-captive pensioner of Russia in Turkestan, where, with remarkable shrewdness, he had taken the measure of his jailer-hosts, and had decided to throw in his lot, if he got the chance, with the English. He no sooner reappeared in Afghanistan than the tribesmen rallied round him, and Lord Lytton offered to make him Amir of Kabul. But Abdur Rahman wanted to be Amir not of Kabul but of Afghanistan. He had not to wait long for the realization of his ambition.

The new Amir had just been installed in Kabul (22 July 1880) and the British preparations for evacuation were all but complete when a new danger arose. Ayub Khan, brother of the late Amir Yakub, gathered round him a large force of tribesmen in the Herat district, and announc-

Roberts's
march to
Kanda-
har.

ing himself as a candidate for the throne marched on Kandahar. General Primrose, left in command at Kandahar, sent out a brigade under Brigadier-General Burrows to stop him. With a totally inadequate force Burrows did his best to carry out his orders. But at Maiwand on 27 July his brigade was cut to pieces by a force overwhelmingly superior, and only a remnant got back to Kandahar. Primrose and his force in Kandahar were now in imminent danger. Kandahar itself was invested by the forces of Ayub Khan, flushed with recent victory. A notable resolution was now taken by the two great soldiers at Kabul. The Government was inclined to attempt the relief of Kandahar from Quetta. Stewart and Roberts, with their ultimate approval, decided to do it from Kabul. Roberts with 10,000 picked men was to succour Kandahar, Stewart was to lead back the rest of the Kabul garrison to India.

On 9 August Roberts's famous march began; by the 31st he had covered the 318 miles of country that separate Kabul from Kandahar. On 1 September his triumph was confirmed and consummated by a brilliant victory over the Afghan forces outside Kandahar. Ayub's army was annihilated, and his political pretensions were destroyed. Roberts became the idol of the army and of his countrymen. The Afghan War was at an end.

Mr. Gladstone in power. Even Lord Lytton shrank from the task of a permanent occupation of Northern and Central Afghanistan. But the disposition of events no longer rested with that brilliant, but impetuous, Viceroy. On the defeat of the Conservative party at the polls (April 1880) he at once tendered his resignation, and it was accepted. Lord Hartington reigned at the India Office in Whitehall, Lord Ripon, as we have seen, went to Calcutta. The new Government, despite strong protests from the Queen, determined upon a complete and immediate reversal of the policy of their predecessors. On one point only was there momentary hesitation. Lord Ripon himself realized the difficulty of abandoning Kandahar. Roberts regarded its retention as of 'vital importance'. All the soldiers in India and most

of the civilians were with him. The Queen ardently supported his views at home.¹ But there were strong arguments on the other side. Sher Ali proved himself to be a weak creature, incapable of maintaining the position in which we had placed him without our help. Abdur Rahman regarded Kandahar as essential to his hold on Herat. To retain it meant friction with the Amir, hostility with the tribesmen, perhaps war with both. Lord Hartington, though not without grave consideration,² decided that as soon as it could be done with dignity and safety Kandahar must be evacuated. Lord Ripon was brought round to the view that the retention of Quetta would give us all the strategic advantages we could desire without the certain expense and possible danger of garrisoning Kandahar. Quetta was retained, and in April 1881 the evacuation of Kandahar was completed. Thus the Treaty of Gandamak was torn up, and Abdur Rahman, having expelled Ayub Khan (who had temporarily regained possession of it) out of Kandahar, at last ruled over 'a friendly, strong, and independent Afghanistan'. The policy of disintegration was repudiated, and we reverted to that of a buffer State. Thanks to the timely emergence of a strong and exceptionally sagacious ruler that policy relieved us of danger, though not of anxiety, for twenty years.

Meanwhile, the Russians, though headed off from Afghanistan, did not desist from their activities in Central Asia. Those activities excited serious alarm both in London and Calcutta. It seemed, indeed, doubtful whether, despite the good will of Abdur Rahman, the 'buffer' would remain intact. There were rumours that Russia was preparing to occupy Merv. Russia disavowed the intention; but early in 1884, relying upon England's preoccupation

The
Penjdeh
incident.

¹ *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. iii (Second Series), chapters ii, iii. The Queen, though admitting that it might be desirable to strengthen Abdur Rahman by handing over Kandahar, wished to be 'convinced of this by the opinions of competent military commanders and not to accept as final a decision that is only based on political and party expediency', p. 139.

² Cf. Holland, *Devonshire*, i. 304-18.

in the Soudan, she did occupy Merv and Saraks, and thus came within 200 miles of Herat. This step was in direct violation of Gortchakoff's assurance given to the British Government in 1882, that Merv 'lay outside the sphere of Russian influence'.¹

Nevertheless, the British Government tamely assented to the proposal for the appointment of a joint Commission to delimit the northern frontier of Afghanistan. The disputed boundary line lay between the rivers Hari Rud and Oxus. Sir Peter Lumsden, the British Commissioner, reached the Afghan frontier on 19 November 1884. His Russian colleague, M. Zelinoi, excused himself on the score of illness until February. February came, but still no Zelinoi. The affront was unmistakable, and British patience was almost exhausted. The Russians usefully employed the interval by occupying various eligible points in dispute.

Lord Dufferin. Matters came to a crisis when, in March 1885, the Russians seized Penjdeh, a disputed post on the Afghan frontier about a hundred miles due south of Merv. The news of the expulsion of the Afghans from Penjdeh aroused public excitement in England to the highest pitch. 'We know', said Gladstone, 'that the attack was a Russian attack; we know that the Afghans suffered in life, in spirit, and in repute; we know that a blow was struck at the credit and authority of the Sovereign, our protected ally, who had committed no offence . . . we must do our best to have right done in the matter.' The British Government acted with unusual promptitude. They called out the Reserves, and moved a vote of credit for £11 millions, £4½ millions of which was for the Soudan Expedition. The Vote was agreed to without a dissentient voice—a broad hint to Russia which did not a little to promote a peaceful issue. The personality of the new Viceroy materially contributed to the same end. In 1884 Lord Ripon had given place to Lord Dufferin, one of the ablest diplomatists, and one of the most brilliant and magnetic personalities of the

¹ Fitzmaurice, *Life of Lord Granville*, ii, p. 420.

day. Lord Dufferin went to India with a long and varied experience of world-politics. After holding minor offices in the ministries of Lord Palmerston and Mr. Gladstone he served as Governor-General in Canada (1872-8), where he helped to consolidate the new federal union. He was British Ambassador at Petersburg during the difficult period which followed on the Congress of Berlin (1879-81). In 1881 he was transferred to Constantinople and did much to reorganize the government of Egypt after Arabi's rebellion in 1882. Viceroy of India (1884-8), it was his first task to deal with the difficulties arising from the Russian attack upon the Afghans at Penjdeh. Abdur Rahman fortunately happened to be at that moment the Viceroy's guest at Rawal Pindi. 'My country', the Amir shrewdly remarked, 'is like a poor goat on whom the lion and the bear have both fixed their eyes, and without the protection of the Almighty Deliverer the victim cannot escape very long.' But like every one else Abdur Rahman found Lord Dufferin's charm irresistible and he readily accepted the suggested arrangement. Penjdeh, for which Adbur Rahman cared comparatively little, was left in the hands of Russia, but in compensation the Amir secured the exclusive control of the Zulfikar Pass, for which he cared much.

Between Russia and Afghanistan the matter was thus satisfactorily adjusted. Between Russia and England, on the contrary, negotiations were protracted until July 1887, when a protocol between the two Powers was signed at Petersburg. By the agreement then reached a definite check was put upon Russian advance towards Herat, and the frontier was settled up to the line of the Oxus. But, checked on the western frontier of Afghanistan, the Russians continued their advance northwards and eastwards, and in 1895 annexed the Pamirs. Their frontier thus came to march with that of Chinese Turkestan to the east, and on the south with that of the British North-West Frontier Provinces, the frontier being defined by another Anglo-Russian Convention signed in 1895. 'The boundary

Anglo-Russian
Agreements,
1887-
1907.

¹ In his Autobiography.

pillars', wrote Sir Alfred Lyall, 'now set up by British and Russian officers on the Hindu Kush and by the Oxus, record the first deliberate and practical attempts made by the two European Powers to stave off the contact of their incessantly expanding Asiatic Empires.'

- The Anglo-Russian Agreement, 1907. Not, however, until the conclusion of the comprehensive Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 was a complete understanding reached between the two Empires. The foundation of the Anglo-Russian Entente was really laid at the Algeciras Conference, where Great Britain was represented by Sir Arthur Nicholson, her accomplished Ambassador at Petersburg. Sir Edward Grey, who had come into office at the end of 1905, threw himself with ardour into the task of improving relations between the two countries. Sir Edward Grey started from this principle: 'When the interests of two Powers are constantly touching and rubbing against one another, it is hard to find a half-way house between constant liability to friction and cordial friendship.' The interests of England and Russia had, as we have seen, been rubbing against one another in Central Asia for the best part of a century. During 1906 and 1907, however, there was a frank interchange of views between London and Petersburg, and at last, on 31 August 1907, the momentous treaty was concluded. The treaty covered all the outstanding questions between the two Powers in Central Asia, and in particular dealt with Tibet, Afghanistan, and Persia. In regard to the first, both parties pledged themselves to respect the integrity of Tibet, to abstain from all interference in internal affairs, to seek no concessions for railways, roads, telegraphs, and mines, or other rights in Tibet; not to send representatives to Lhasa, and to deal with Tibet only through the intermediary of its suzerain, the Chinese Government. As regards Afghanistan a still more important arrangement was concluded. Subject to the consent of the Amir (which has never, be it observed, been obtained), the Russian Government recognized Afghanistan 'as outside the sphere of Russian influence; they engaged that all their political relations with Afghani-
- (a) Tibet.
- (b) Afghanistan

stan should be conducted through the intermediary of Great Britain, and undertook not to send any agents into Afghanistan'. Great Britain, on its side, declared that there was no intention of changing the political status of Afghanistan; that British influence would be exercised in a pacific sense, and that no steps were contemplated, or would be encouraged, against Russia. Finally, there was to be complete equality of commercial opportunity in Afghanistan for both countries.

Most important of all was the agreement concerning (c) Persia. Persia. The two Powers engaged to respect the integrity and independence of Persia, and to keep the door open to the trade and industry of all other nations. Persia was, however, mapped out into three spheres of influence. The Russian sphere embraced the north and centre, including the chief Persian cities of Tabriz, Teheran, and Ispahan. The British sphere was in the south and east; it included the coastal district of the Persian Gulf and of the Indian Ocean to the frontiers of Baluchistan. Between the two spheres of influence was interposed a neutral zone, in which both Powers were free to obtain political or commercial concessions, while renouncing any such freedom in the spheres assigned respectively to Russia and Great Britain. The details of this arrangement were sharply criticized in both Houses of Parliament and in certain sections of the press. Sir Edward Grey retorted that the treaty must be judged as a whole; and while not admitting that it was unduly favourable to Russia as regards Persia, pointed conclusively to the substantial concession made by Russia to us as regards Afghanistan.

To retrace our steps to India. With Lord Dufferin's attitude towards the constitutional problem we have already dealt. It remains only to record the steps he took for increasing the security of the British Empire in India. Lord Dufferin in India.

The Penjdeh incident reopened the question as to the adequacy of the Indian army to meet all the various demands that evidently might be made upon it. Lord Dufferin, with general approval, initiated a series of measures to strengthen

the military situation. Abdur Rahman was adamant against any schemes even faintly suggestive of a British protectorate over Afghanistan, but Quetta was now part of the Indian Empire, and Lord Dufferin was, therefore, fully entitled to link it up with the Indian railway system. He also raised the strength of the army by an addition of 10,600 British, and 20,000 native soldiers; he introduced the system of linked battalions and he devised a scheme for the establishment of an Imperial Service Corps to be raised and maintained by the Feudatory States, but to be trained under the supervision of British officers. This Corps came into being in 1889; it has done splendid service, and now consists of over 40,000 men. Lord Dufferin also constituted a new force of Burma military police.

Upper
Burma.

Thibaw, King of Upper Burma, had lately been giving trouble, primarily to his own subjects, but incidentally to the British Government. The maritime provinces of Arakan and Tenasserim had, as we have seen, been acquired by Lord Amherst in 1826. Pegu was annexed by Lord Dalhousie after the second Burmese War of 1852. Lord Dufferin completed Lord Dalhousie's work. King Thibaw, an Oriental despot of the worst type, was required to receive a British Envoy at Mandalay, to give British subjects facilities for trade with China, and to conduct his foreign policy in accordance with the advice tendered to him by Great Britain. He refused. His capital, Mandalay, was occupied by General Prendergast, without any real resistance (28 November 1885); Thibaw was deposed and his kingdom was annexed (1 January 1886). The country—with an area larger than that of France—was, however, reduced to obedience only after two years of harassing guerrilla warfare. Once conquered it was rapidly brought into a state of high administrative efficiency by a band of skilled civilians. Burma was raised to the status of a Lieutenant-Governorship in 1897, and in 1923 was constituted a Governor's Province under the Act of 1919. The Statutory Commission (1930) has recommended, with general

approval, that it should be dissevered from India, and become a separate Dependency.

Lord Dufferin retired in 1888 and was succeeded by the Marquess of Lansdowne who, like himself, had been Governor-General of Canada, and like himself was an Irishman—though in Lord Lansdowne's veins a large infusion of French blood mingled with the Irish.

Under Lord Lansdowne and his immediate successors, Lord Elgin and Lord Curzon, questions of frontier defence were kept almost continuously to the fore. The general situation, due to the absorption of weak Asiatic States by great European Powers, could not be better described than in the words already quoted from Lord Curzon's speeches. The boundaries of the Great Powers were not coterminous, but were separated from each other by belts of territory defined by Lord Lansdowne as a 'sphere of influence within which we shall not attempt to administer ourselves, but within which we shall not allow any aggression from without'. On these territories it was evidently necessary to keep a watchful eye. The whole of the wild hill country stretching from Baluchistan up to Kashmir was debatable land of this type. In 1890 Lord Lansdowne was impelled to incorporate in the Trans-Indus Protectorate a slice of territory inhabited by the Pathans. About the same time the government of Kashmir was taken over, but although a British Resident was established at Gilgit, Kashmir itself was not annexed.

Various attempts had been made, since the Penjdeh incident, to obtain a more accurate and satisfactory delimitation of the Afghan-Russian frontier on the one side and the Afghan-Indian frontier on the other; and in 1893 an agreement was reached between Abdur Rahman (with whom under Lord Lansdowne relations were somewhat strained) and Sir Mortimer Durand, acting on behalf of the Government of India. The Amir's subsidy was increased from twelve to eighteen lacs of rupees; he was to be allowed to import rifles, guns, and munitions of war at discretion (a point on which he was very insistent), and in

return he promised to refrain from interference with the Afridis, Waziris, and other frontier tribes.

Manipur.

The only serious break in the general tranquillity characteristic of Lord Lansdowne's régime was due to a tragic occurrence in the small hill-state of Manipur on the borders of Assam. In 1891 Mr. Quinton, the Chief Commissioner of Assam, was sent to Manipur with an escort of five hundred men to report on the serious disturbances which had arisen from a disputed succession in the ruling house. His interference was resented and opposed: some fighting ensued, and Mr. Quinton and three of his staff, having been enticed into an interview with the Senapati, or Commander-in-Chief of the local army, were treacherously and brutally put to death. A small force was then dispatched to occupy the capital: the insult to the British Raj was avenged, and the murderers hanged. The administration of the country was temporarily entrusted to the British Political agent, who abolished slavery in the State and effected other useful reforms. But the State was not annexed. The young Rajah was sent to the Mayo College at Ajmer, and when he attained his majority was restored to his throne.

Another border chieftain the Khan of Khelat was, in consequence of a series of revolting murders and other acts of violence, required (1892) to abdicate in favour of his son.

Thus did the paramount Power enforce a decent standard of behaviour upon the Chiefs of the turbulent tribes within its sphere of influence.

Lord
Elgin.

Lord Elgin carried on (1894-9) the work of his predecessor. He completed the demarcation of the Afghan boundary; delimited the frontier between Burma on the one side and China and Siam on the other; he concluded with Russia an agreement settling the frontier between the two great Empires in the Pamirs, and in 1895 he was compelled to fight one of our many 'little wars' on the northern frontier in Chitral. Chitral was included, under the Durand agreement with Afghanistan, in the British sphere of influence. In 1895 Dr. Robertson, the British agent at Gilgit,

was sent to Chitral to look into the cause of disturbances which had occurred there and found himself besieged in the capital. The Malakand Field Force of 15,000 men was dispatched to extricate him, but the relief of the garrison was actually effected by Colonel Kelly's brilliant march from Gilgit. Lord Elgin wished to annex Chitral; the Rosebery Government vetoed its retention, but before the evacuation could be carried out Lord Salisbury had returned to power (1895), and reversed the decision of his predecessor.

Much more serious were the operations on the frontier in 1897-8. One rising after another took place among the fierce tribes of the Himalayas, and before they were suppressed two large armies had to be dispatched into the district: one under Sir Bindon Blood operated against the Mohmands to the north of Kabul river; another under Sir William Lockhart against the Afridis south of it. At least 40,000 troops were employed, including a contingent of the Imperial Service Corps, who, under Indian princes, fought side by side with the British troops, and the casualties were heavy. The tribesmen eventually made submission, paid the fines imposed on them, and surrendered their arms; but they had proved themselves no unworthy antagonists, and they have since shown that the continuance of their submission is conditioned solely by the degree of respect inspired by superior military equipment and preparedness.

In 1899 there arrived as Viceroy a man who brought a strong will and an exceptionally well-informed mind to bear upon the problem of defence—as indeed upon all other problems demanding solution at the hands of the Government of India. Lord Curzon,
1899-
1905.

No Viceroy that ever reigned in India had ever prepared himself for the great task with such assiduity as Lord Curzon. Four times already had he visited the country over which he had long since made up his mind to rule. He had made a first-hand study of Asiatic problems in their varied aspects, had published valuable nonographs on the subject,

and had formed the personal acquaintance of most of the Asiatic rulers and statesmen of the time. He was thus splendidly equipped for the work which lay before him.

Only with his treatment of the problems arising in connexion with the defence of the frontiers are we now concerned. In that department he initiated an entirely new departure. He was not the man to be content with any makeshift policy, still less to surrender to the 'paralysing influence of labels'. Of 'elastic and pliable adjectives' he would have none. 'Let our new frontier policy', he said (referring to the 'Lawrence' policy and the 'Forward' policy), 'be called by any name that men choose. Only let it be based not upon obsolete political formulas, but upon up-to-date common sense.' We ought to be able 'in the light of our experience, our pledges, our armaments, and our general resources' to draft 'a code of frontier policy which could with consistency, and without violent interruptions, be applied to the whole line of our North-Western frontier from the Pamirs to Baluchistan'. Accordingly he formulated and carried into effect a 'policy of military concentration as against diffusion, and of tribal conciliation in place of exasperation'. He withdrew the regular troops from advanced positions in tribal territory, concentrated them in posts upon or near to the Indian frontier, and replaced them in tribal tracts by 'bodies of tribal levies trained up by British officers to act as a militia in defence of their own native valleys and hills'. In other words, he substituted 'a policy of frontier garrisons drawn from the people themselves for the costly experiment of large forts and isolated posts thrown forward into a turbulent and fanatical country'. To support and sustain the new policy he greatly improved the railway communications with critical points on the frontiers, and he crowned all by the creation of a North-West Frontier Province. In April 1902 he held at Peshawar a great Durbar which was attended by 3,000 persons including the Chiefs of Chitral, Dir, the Malakand Agency, the Khyber, and other border districts, and reassured them as to the peaceful intentions of the British

Government. We sincerely desired to leave the Chiefs in possession of their territories. 'You are', he said, 'the keepers of your own house. . . . But if you dart out from behind the shelter of the door to harass and pillage and slay, then you must not be surprised if we return quickly and batter the door in.' We paid the chiefs and tribes allowances for keeping open the passes and roads such as the Khyber and Kohat passes and the Chitral road, and we opened to the young men a manly and well-paid career in their own countries in the local militias. In the levies of Swat, and Dir, and Chitral, in the Khyber Rifles, the Semana Rifles, the Kurram Militia, and the Waziristan Militia many thousands were employed, and to those who proved worthy the India army itself was opened.

Speaking, towards the end of his term as Viceroy (30 March 1904), Lord Curzon referred with justifiable pride to the success of his policy. He could then look back upon 'five years unmarked by a single expedition on the entire North-West Frontier'. On a frontier 1,200 miles in length on which previous to 1898 there had been almost continuous fighting,¹ only 109 men had lost their lives in five years! He then surveyed the situation from Gilgit to Baluchistan, showing how, at point after point—at Gilgit, Chitral, Dargai, the Khyber and Kohat passes, the Samana, the Kurram Valley, Waziristan, British troops had been withdrawn and replaced by disciplined native levies. So much improved was the whole frontier situation that it was at one time deemed safe to deplete the Indian army by over 31,000 men in the interest of Imperial campaigns in South Africa and Somaliland.

From the North-West Frontier terminating in Balu-^{The Persian Gulf.}chistan it is no far cry to the Persian Gulf. Almost from his undergraduate days Lord Curzon had taken a deep interest in Persian affairs, and so long ago as 1892 had published two bulky volumes on the subject. In a graphic and characteristic chapter on the Persian Gulf he paid an eloquent tribute to the great work achieved by Great

¹ Between 1850 and 1922 there were no fewer than 72 such expeditions.

Britain for the pacification of those 'troublesome waters', and insisted that while Great Britain had no desire that the Gulf should be closed to foreign traders, while she asked for no territorial concessions for herself, she did claim—and justly claimed—that 'no hostile political influence shall introduce its discordant features upon the scene'.

'Let Great Britain and Russia', he added, 'fight their battles or compose their differences elsewhere, but let them not turn into a scene of sanguinary conflict the peaceful field of a hard-won trade. I should regard the concession of a port upon the Persian Gulf to Russia by any power as a deliberate insult to Great Britain, as a wanton rupture of the *status quo*, and as an intentional provocation to war; and I should impeach the British Minister, who was guilty of acquiescing in such a surrender, as a traitor to his country.'¹

Twelve years after those characteristic words were written Lord Curzon, as Viceroy of India, was making a triumphal progress from port to port on the Gulf, escorted by an imposing naval flotilla (Nov.-Dec. 1903). Four European Powers had of late years been fishing in those troubled waters, their activities being particularly noticeable during our preoccupation with South Africa. France had established a Consulate at Muscat in 1894, and four years later secretly acquired a coaling-station at Bundar Tissah, some five miles away from Muscat. News of this reached Calcutta, but Downing Street preferred to accept an official denial of the fact from Paris. The Viceroy, however, acting on his better information, dispatched Colonel Meade, the Political Agent in the Gulf, to demand from the Sultan of Oman a revocation of the concession. The Sultan demurred but Meade was supported by a British cruiser, and to Admiral Douglas's threat of bombardment he yielded, and revoked the concession. As the Sultan had in 1891 agreed with the British Government never to alienate, or permit a foreign State to occupy, any of his territory, the concession was a gross breach of faith, and the threatened

¹ *Persia*, ii. 463.

bombardment justified. In February 1900 a Russian gun-boat arrived at Bundar Abbas with a similar object, but on the opportune appearance of H.M.S. *Pomone* in the same port, apparently thought better of it.

By far the finest harbour in the Gulf is, however, Koweit. Koweit, and on Koweit both Germany and Turkey cast longing eyes, with a view to making it the terminus of the Bagdad railway. A German mission reached Koweit overland in 1900, but the Sheikh Mubarrak had in the previous year concluded with Great Britain an agreement to allow no foreign intrusions, and accordingly declined the German overtures. Turkey was no more successful in its advances to the Sheikh than Germany.

Ever since his arrival in India Lord Curzon had been pressing upon the Foreign Office the importance of a more active policy in Persia, but Lord Salisbury was curiously insensible to the dangers so clearly apparent to the Viceroy. Lord Lansdowne, with his Indian experience, was more sympathetic with Lord Curzon's views, and on 5 May 1903 made an important announcement in the House of Lords: 'I say it without hesitation that we should regard the establishment of a naval base or of a fortified port in the Persian Gulf by any other Power as a very grave menace to British interests, and we should certainly resist with all the means at our disposal.'

The world took note of this emphatic declaration. Lord Curzon was at last satisfied.

It may be convenient to add that the question of the Persian Gulf was not included in the agreement concluded in 1907 between Great Britain and Russia, but Sir Edward Grey informed our Ambassador at Petersburg that the Russian Government had in the course of the negotiations 'explicitly stated that they do not deny the special interests of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf—a statement of which H.M. Government have formally taken note'.¹

In regard to the Persian Gulf Lord Curzon's policy was Tibet. as successful as it deserved to be. Much more equivocal

¹ Sir E. Grey to Sir A. Nicholson, 29 August 1907.

was his 'unveiling' of Lhasa. The Tibetans had for centuries maintained themselves in almost complete isolation, though the theocratic oligarchy by which the mountaineers were governed had in a very general way acknowledged the suzerainty of China. We had no possible reason for intruding upon Tibetan isolation except that of late years the ruling Dalai Lama had shown some inclination to exchange the suzerainty of China for that of Russia. So persistent were rumours to this effect that, in 1902, Lord Lansdowne thought it well to remind Russia that we were much nearer neighbours to Tibet than was Russia, and much more closely interested in it, and consequently that if there were 'any display of Russian activity in that country we should be obliged to reply by a display of activity not only equivalent to but exceeding that of Russia'.

To repeated communications from the Viceroy the Dalai Lama did not even deign to reply—a discourtesy which Lord Curzon ascribed to the ascendant influence of Russia. The Home Government then reluctantly sanctioned the dispatch of an armed mission under Colonel (now Sir Francis) Younghusband which, despite some armed resistance, reached Lhasa, entered the mysterious city, situated at a height of nearly 13,000 feet, and imposed terms which would have practically made Tibet a British Protectorate. But Colonel Younghusband, while entitled to the highest praise for his brilliant conduct of a most difficult expedition, had clearly exceeded instructions, and was practically repudiated by the Home Government. Except as affording an example of superb organization and endurance it was a sorry business. The little trade it brought us was much too dearly bought. Our last remaining troops were withdrawn from the country in 1908 by orders from Whitehall, against the wish of the Indian Government.

Meanwhile, Tibet, as already indicated, had been included in the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907. As regards Tibet the whole benefit of the arrangement accrued to

China, and so humiliating was the yoke she imposed on the Tibetans that in 1910 the Dalai Lama fled to Calcutta and there begged for help against his Chinese masters. The self-denying ordinance of 1907 rendered it impossible for the Viceroy to give any help. China was left to work her will on Tibet. To that extent Lord Curzon's foresight was vindicated.

XVI

THE WAR AND AFTER

Loyalty, Licence, Liberty.

THE three preceding chapters, essential though they were to a comprehension of the period still to be reviewed, were in a sense parenthetical. During the last fifteen years, interest has been mainly concentrated on three points: the wonderful demonstration of loyalty to the British Crown and the British Empire evoked by the World War; the deeply regrettable development of anarchical agitation; and the momentous constitutional changes embodied in, and consequential upon, the *Government of India Act* of 1919.

The outbreak of the War found India quite unprepared for military participation in a struggle, waged on a large scale, and in areas far distant from India. Lord Kitchener had planned and initiated a reorganization of the Indian army, but the military authorities, both in India and at home, had in view only a possible attack by Russia or her allies on the north-west frontier. After the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Agreement (1907) his elaborate schemes of reorganization were abandoned. But in August 1913 the Government of India was asked to say what help India could give in the event of a serious European war, and agreed to furnish two or possibly three divisions and one cavalry brigade; but no real preparation was made for an overseas expedition, for the supply of munitions, equipment, or transport. The army in India has, indeed, always been maintained in a state of preparedness for local war, and has been constantly employed. Between 1850 and 1922 there were, for example, no fewer than seventy-two expeditions against the Himalayan frontier. It is noteworthy, as the Statutory Commissioners pointed out,

'that notwithstanding the teeming millions of India's population, comparatively small bodies of invaders have often succeeded in overcoming all opposition and making their way

through to the plains, where they have established themselves as conquerors. It is the difficult and necessary role of the army in India to guard against these dangers.'¹

That is not its only function; the lessons taught by the Mutiny could not be ignored. Provision had to be made for internal security as well as for external defence. The precautions which, as we have seen, Lord Dalhousie would have taken to this end before the outbreak of the Mutiny, were afterwards adopted.

'Broadly speaking', to quote Sir William Hunter, 'the number of British troops was doubled while that of the native troops was reduced to one-half.'² The native army was remodelled both as to its material and its organization. The Sikh, the Gurkha, and the Pathans have largely supplanted the pampered sepoy of the middle valley of the Ganges and Oudh. The native army thus recruited from hardier materials is also better organized. Not only has the fighting value of each battalion been greatly increased, but it is so composed as to render combination of its units against authority much more difficult.'

Besides the reconstitution of the army, internal safety has been secured by a 'widely spread unobtrusive system of local defence works, scientifically planned and vigilantly inspected',³ strategic railways have been constructed, and a most elaborate system of defence works has been completed with the object of guarding the two main entrances into India by Quetta and the Khyber.

Nor have the military authorities relied exclusively on the regular army. The Indian States maintain at the disposal of the Paramount Power a magnificent force now (1930) numbering over 40,000 men trained by British officers. There is also an Auxiliary Volunteer Force

¹ Report, i. 94.

² In 1856 there were 245,000 native soldiers as against 40,000 British—a ratio of 6 to 1. In 1881 the British troops numbered 60,000, the native troops 110,000. By 1891, owing to the steady advance of Russia in Central Asia, the total was raised to 220,000 (71,000 British, and 149,000 natives—a ratio which was adopted as the normal).

³ Paper read before the Society of Arts (*Journal*, 24 February 1893).

(mainly Anglo-Indians or Eurasians) of 30,000, a Reserve Force of 32,000, and an Indian Territorial Force of about 15,000.

When the Great War broke out in August 1914 there were, exclusive of the Indian Reserves, the Volunteers, and the Imperial Service Forces, about 235,000 men under arms in India: 75,000 were British and 160,000 formed the Indian army (with 2,771 British officers, and 341 British non-commissioned officers). When the call from Europe came, the response in India was immediate, spontaneous, and superb. On 8 August orders for mobilization were sent to Meerut and Lahore, and before the end of the month the Lahore Division had embarked. Owing, however, to the lack of transports and escorts, the embarkation of the rest of the expeditionary force was delayed for some weeks. In a short time all but eight of the regular British battalions and most of the Batteries were withdrawn from India, and were replaced by 29 Territorial Field Batteries and 35 Territorial battalions sent out from England.

The
Legisla-
tive
Council. On 8 September the Imperial Legislative Council met at Simla, and the Viceroy conveyed to it a message from the King-Emperor. In reply, the Council passed, with enthusiasm and unanimity, a resolution affirming their 'unswerving loyalty and enthusiastic devotion to their King-Emperor', and promising 'unflinching support to the British Government'. They expressed the opinion that 'the people of India, in addition to the assistance now being afforded by India to the Empire, would wish to share in the heavy financial burden now imposed by the War on the United Kingdom'. Such sentiments expressed on all sides with great fervour and obvious sincerity were partly due to the anxiety of India not to be behind other 'Dominions', partly to gratitude for the blessings enjoyed under British rule. Sir Surendranath Banerjee, for example, was inspired by the former motive: Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis by the latter. 'We aspire', said the former, 'to Colonial self-government; then we ought to emulate the example of the Colonials, and try to do what they are doing.' Sir Gan-

gadhar Chitnavis, who moved the resolution, gave expression less to the hope of future concessions than of gratitude for past and present favours.

'We know,' he said, 'that our present condition is due to the peace we have enjoyed under the British rule, that our very existence depends upon the continuation of that rule. We cannot, on this occasion, be mere onlookers. Along with our devotion and sympathy, the general idea is to make any contribution required of us.'

Before the end of the War India's contribution in money exceeded £113,000,000.

The world at large gradually heard of these things with admiring astonishment; Germany was bitterly undeceived: Bernhardt had predicted that 'the first shot fired in a European War would be the signal for the dissolution of Britain's loosely compacted Empire'. The event proved him to be a false prophet. The whole Empire rallied to a cause which it recognized as its own.

Not least was this true of India. Together with the messages already mentioned, the Viceroy telegraphed to the British Government (8 September) that 'the Rulers of the Native States in India, who number several hundred in all, have with one accord rallied to the defence of the Empire and offered their personal services and the resources of their States for the War', and that from among the many Princes and nobles who had volunteered for active service he had selected some half-dozen Princes including the Rulers of Patiala and Bikaner, Sir Partab Singh, and other cadets and nobles, and had accepted many offers of native contingents. He also reported that:

'The same spirit prevailed throughout British India. Hundreds of telegrams and letters had . . . come from communities and associations, religious, political and social, of all classes and creeds, also from individuals offering their resources or asking for opportunity to prove their loyalty by personal service.'

The story of India's War effort is truly magnificent, but ^{India's effort.}

it must be read in the specialized histories of the War.¹ It must suffice to say here that in the course of the War no fewer than 600,000 combatants (mostly Punjabis, Sikhs, Rajputs, and Gurkhas) and 474,000 non-combatants were sent overseas, and that they distinguished themselves in nearly all the chief theatres of the War, notably in Mesopotamia, Palestine, Salonika, Gallipoli, and East Africa. The Bengali contribution to war-service was negligible.

No fewer than 26,000 officers and men of the Imperial Service Forces were included in the troops sent overseas, and they lost in dead over 1,500 men. Of the Indian forces as a whole over 53,000 were killed or died of wounds. These losses, very largely augmented, of course, by wounded, were, as Lord Curzon truly said, 'shattering'. But he added: 'In the face of these trials and difficulties the cheerfulness, the loyalty, the good discipline and intrepid courage of these denizens of another clime cannot be too highly praised'.

Reaction in India. Unfortunately the splendid spirit manifested in India in the early days of the War was not maintained until its close.

'The War', as Sir Valentine Chirol has said, 'lasted too long and was too remote from [the Indian people]. . . . The sick and wounded from Mesopotamia brought home too often tales of mismanagement and defeat, startlingly corroborated by the thunderbolt of the Kut surrender If England had been reluctant at first to credit Kitchener's prophecy that the War would last three years, Indians were still more at a loss to understand why victory should be so slow to come to Great Britain and her powerful allies, and they began to doubt whether it would come at all.'

Renewed agitation. Such doubts were sedulously disseminated by the disaffected Babus of Bengal who had contributed nothing of personal service to the War effort; the revolutionary agitation was renewed; the anarchical elements once more came to the front.

¹ Notably in *The Official History of the War* (H.M.S.O.), France and Belgium (vol. i), and Mesopotamia (vol. iv).

During the first two years of the War there was, as we have seen, a lull in the political agitation and an almost complete cessation of outrages or even disorder.¹ The exception, curiously enough, was provided by the Punjab, whose peasants supplied half the combatants in the expeditionary forces. The immediate cause of the outbreak was the return to India of some 400 Sikhs and 50-60 Punjabi Moslems who, contrary to the immigration orders, had attempted to land at Vancouver, and had been refused admission by the Canadian authorities. Inflamed by propaganda literature circulated by Indian revolutionary societies which had long been pursuing their unholy activities in the United States as well as in China and other parts of the Far East, these Punjabis returned to India, bent upon making trouble for the British Government. Immediately after landing they provoked a riot in Calcutta in which eighteen Sikhs and two or three policemen were killed. Then the centre of the storm shifted to the Punjab, and for some ten months (October 1914-August 1915) the Punjab was the scene of a serious revolutionary outbreak, eventually quelled by the courage and resource of the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, loyally supported by the great majority of the inhabitants, as well as by the Rulers of the native States in the Punjab. In the suppression of the disorders in the Punjab, as well as others which, later in the War, broke out elsewhere, the Government was materially assisted, on the one hand by the passing (March 1915) of a *Criminal Law Amendment Act*, conferring upon the Executive in India powers similar to those conferred upon it in England by the Defence of the Realm Regulations; on the other by the 'correct' attitude of the Congress and the Moslem League.

But the lull was temporary and delusive. In 1914 ^{Personalities.} B. G. Tilak was released on the expiration of his sentence of six years' imprisonment. Described by Sir Valentine

¹ Despite his great personal popularity Lord Hardinge had been the object of a murderous attack on the occasion of his state entry into Delhi in December 1913.

Chitral as 'the most striking personality in the India of our times, except, perhaps, Gandhi', and generally acclaimed as a born leader of men, Tilak was a Poona Brahmin, who from the early 'nineties onwards had been the powerful and acknowledged leader of the Hindu extremists. Closely associated with him was Mrs. Annie Besant, well known as a Theosophist, who since 1893 had settled in India, and devoted herself to social reform, women's education, and political agitation. G. K. Gokhale, like Tilak a Poona Brahmin, but opposed to his extreme views and violent methods, died prematurely in 1915, and the field was thus left open to the extremists. In the following year the Congress meeting at Cawnpore endorsed the demand formulated by Tilak and Mrs. Besant for 'Home Rule within the Empire', and in 1917 elected Mrs. Besant, to her great gratification, to the Presidential chair.

Declaration of 20 August, 1917. The summer of 1917 was, perhaps, the most critical period in the War in Europe. Russia had fallen out, the United States had hardly come in, and England had been brought, by the success of the German submarines, to the verge of starvation, if not of surrender.¹ This was the moment chosen by the British Government for the historic announcement made to Parliament on 20 August.

'The policy of His Majesty's Government,' so the Declaration ran, 'with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. They have decided that substantial steps in this direction should be taken as soon as possible, and that it is of the highest importance as a preliminary to considering what these steps should be that there should be a free and informal exchange of opinion between those in authority at home and in India. His Majesty's Government have accordingly decided, with His Majesty's approval, that I should accept the Viceroy's invitation to proceed to India to discuss

¹ Cf. the official *History of the War: Naval Operations*, vol. iv, c. ix; W. Churchill, *World Crisis*, vol. iv, and Admiral Sims, *The Victory at Sea*.

these matters with the Viceroy and the Government of India, to consider with the Viceroy the views of local Governments, and to receive with him the suggestions of representative bodies and others.

I would add that progress in this policy can only be achieved by successive stages. The British Government and the Government of India, on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples, must be judges of the time and measure of such advance, and they must be guided by the co-operation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility.

As was only to be expected, public attention fastened upon the first paragraph, and in particular upon the crucial words 'responsible government', while the second and conditioning paragraph was at the time and subsequently too often ignored.

The Declaration was made to the House of Commons by Mr. E. S. Montagu, who had only just succeeded Sir Austen Chamberlain as Secretary of State for India; but his responsibility for it was not so great as that of the War Cabinet, of which he was not a member, and was notably less than that of Lord Curzon, of the War Cabinet, whose pen had drafted the critical words.¹ Detached from the political context in India the Declaration would not, indeed, have possessed any special significance had it not been immediately followed by Mr. Montagu's mission to India, by the publication of the Report by him and the newly-appointed Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, and by the resulting legislation of 1919. Save for the words 'responsible government', now for the first time officially used in relation to India, this Declaration marked but little advance upon others which, as indicated in pre-

¹ Ronaldshay, *Life of Curzon*, iii, p. 168. Lord Ronaldshay confesses that Lord Curzon's attitude in 1917-19 was 'extremely difficult to understand' and that his mind 'seemed to be tossing painfully on a sea of indecision'. May it be explained by his concentration on the War and the Peace?

vious chapters, have been periodically embodied in Acts of Parliament or Royal Proclamations from 1833 onwards. But coming at a moment when the whole British Empire was fain to acknowledge a deep debt of gratitude to the Indian Princes and to the fighting peoples of India, it was natural that unusual significance should have been attached to the Declaration. Unfortunately, it was interpreted in India not as a graceful acknowledgement of the co-operation of loyal India in a War common to the Empire, but as a concession to the Congress politicians, to whom the Empire owed and meant less than nothing.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Report. That interpretation was naturally accentuated by the publication (April 1918) of the famous *Report* made to Parliament by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State.

The Report was an exceedingly able document, and besides an admirable survey of the existing situation, set forth a number of detailed recommendations for the future government of India. To those recommendations, subsequently embodied in the Act of 1919, further reference must presently be made. One sentence, almost parenthetically inserted in the Report, revealed the spirit which inspired and illuminated the constitutional details:

'We believe profoundly that the time has now come when the sheltered existence which we have given India cannot be prolonged without damage to her national life . . . that nationhood within the Empire represents something better than anything India has hitherto attained; that the placid pathetic contentment of the masses is not the soil on which Indian nationhood will grow, and that in deliberately disturbing it we are working for her highest good.'

To disturb contentment is, under any circumstances, to assume a terrible responsibility, and nothing that has since happened in India can be held in any degree to have justified in this case the assumption. It might, however, have been anticipated that a Report designed to disturb contentment would at least placate the extremists. It did nothing of the kind. On the contrary, the Congress Party declared that the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme meant for India

'perpetual slavery which can only be broken by a revolution'.

They proceeded to do their best to break it. Meanwhile, ominously coincident with the publication of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report was that of a Committee, presided over by an eminent English judge, Mr. Justice Rowlatt. This Committee was appointed in December 1917 to investigate the genesis and character of the conspiracies and outrages which had recently gone far to terrorize a country where the people at large are, for the most part, peaceable and law-abiding. Its Report, published in 1918, revealed a dangerous and widespread conspiracy designed, by means of bomb-outrages, by murder and assassination of police officers and other officials, by gang-robberies recalling the 'dacoities' of old days, and by other serious crimes, to paralyse, and ultimately by force to extinguish, British rule in India. In Bengal alone there had been since 1906 no fewer than 311 outrages for which only 34 persons ultimately suffered punishment. But the network of conspiracy extended to most of the other Provinces as well. So skilful was the directing organization that the actual culprits constantly escaped detection, but the Committee had no hesitation in fixing the ultimate responsibility upon a relatively small body of young men, western-educated and high-caste Hindus, whose propaganda was not less pernicious than pervasive. The Committee recommended that emergency powers should be conferred by legislation upon the Executive: two Bills were introduced in 1919 to carry out the recommendations: one—the *Rowlatt Act*—was passed, but, in view of the new *Government of India Act* (1919) was never put into force.

The passing of the *Rowlatt Act* evoked a storm of indignant protest and led to a persistent agitation which brought to the front of the political arena one of the most remarkable and most inscrutable personalities who have ever appeared in India. Whether Mr. Gandhi is primarily saint or schemer, *poseur* or patriot, is not for the present writer—perhaps for any one—to determine. He is un-

deniably astute, and his vanity and self-assurance are as evident as his sincerity; but the relevant fact is that by untold millions of Hindus he is venerated as the *Mahatma* or 'Great Soul', that he has acquired an unparalleled influence among them, and has inspired his immediate disciples with a devotion which only strong character can evoke.¹

An English-trained barrister by profession, Mr. Gandhi, for more than twenty years (1893-1914), resided in South Africa, and besides a courageous fight against the plague epidemic in Johannesburg in 1904, rendered valuable service in a non-combatant capacity during the Boer War of 1899, and the Zulu revolt in 1908.

It was, however, as the champion of the rights of the Indian immigrants in South Africa that Mr. Gandhi first attracted public notice and, incidentally, came into conflict with the law. The passing of the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance in Natal (1906) led him to initiate, and for eight years successfully maintain, a 'Passive Resistance' movement among the Indians in South Africa. He has since repeated the experiment on a vastly extended scale in India to which in 1914 he returned.

The agitation against the *Rowlatt Act* gave him his first opportunity, and he seized it with consummate ability. Two years later (1920) Tilak's death left vacant the leadership of the Congress Extremists: Mr. Gandhi immediately assumed it. But he disclaims political weapons: his sword is that of the spirit. Material progress of every kind he regards as the Devil's work, and if he desires the expulsion of the English from India, it is not, so he avers, because they are English, but because they have acted as the Devil's agents in defiling a land of primitive contentment and peace with the screech of the locomotive and the motor-car, the whirr of machinery, and the curse of competitive industry. Not that Mr. Gandhi altogether

¹ Since this chapter went to press, there has appeared a remarkable 'impression' of Mr. Gandhi by R. Bernays, *The Naked Fakir* (London, 1931).

contemns the devices of modern civilization. He has availed himself, for example, of the skill of an English surgeon, and much of the success of his anti-British agitation depends on the support of native capitalists and industrialists. But it is evident that he has himself 'brought his body under', and we may well believe that his ultimate reliance is upon 'soul weapons' and that his final appeal is neither to force nor to reason, but to conscience.

We cannot, however, acquit Mr. Gandhi of gross inaccuracy in his reading of history, if read it he does; nor of palpable perversion of facts, accessible to the most superficial student. The man who wishes to point an economic contrast has no right to be ignorant of economic history; nor can misrepresentation be excused by reference to inspiration. How Mr. Gandhi faces the obstinate problems presented by the task of constitutional reconstruction will presumably be revealed in the final Report of the Round Table Conference.

That Conference is the penultimate link in the chain of events which started with the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, and to the intermediate links we must now turn.

In February 1919 Mr. Gandhi launched his Civil Disobedience Campaign—an advance upon passive resistance, which was followed almost immediately, in sinister sequence if not direct consequence, by renewed outbreaks at Delhi, Ahmadabad, Amritsar, and other places. The most violent disturbances occurred in Gujarat, Mr. Gandhi's native Province, and at Amritsar, near Lahore, where a very formidable rising was quelled by the drastic action taken by General Dyer. The Amritsar incident has been very variously judged: it was (in Carlyle's phrase) no 'rose-water surgery', but it may be that, though it cost hundreds of lives, it saved thousands; that even if General Dyer temporarily lost his head and finally his job, he saved a Province. Anyway, the scale of the disturbances may be judged by the fact that in connexion with the outrages in Lahore and Amritsar no fewer than 2,500 persons were

brought to trial, and 1,800 were convicted. With the help of martial law order was gradually restored.

Afghan War. Other anxieties pressed upon a harassed Government in the year 1919. In February, Habibulla, the Amir of Afghanistan, who had for a considerable period held his 'fretful realm in awe', was murdered, and his son Amanulla, after the usual interval of disorder, reigned in his stead. The first act of the new Amir was to launch an attack upon the north-west frontier of India.

Whether the Amir was acting in sympathy with the Civil Disobedience movement in India; whether he was incited to activity by the agents of Bolshevist Russia; or whether his action was due to the Khalifate agitation, then at its height, and the restlessness which pervaded the Moslem world, matters little. The moment was evidently well chosen. The Indian army was war-weary and in process of demobilization; it had lost many of its best officers; propaganda had done its insidious work among the tribesmen of the frontier; many of the irregular troops recruited from those tribesmen were disaffected and deserted with their arms to the enemy; the Punjab itself was seething with the spirit of revolt. But the situation was promptly handled, and in August terms of peace were dictated to the Amir at Rawalpindi. The subsidy granted to the Amir was withdrawn, as was the privilege of importing arms and munitions into Afghanistan through India; a British Commission was to rectify the frontier at some disputed points; but, on the other hand, the Amir was freed from British tutelage as regards his foreign relations. All was well. But that the war was no mere 'parade' is attested by the fact that at one time nearly 350,000 troops were in the field.

The Government of India Act, 1919. Undeterred by the Afghan War, by the epidemic of disorder, and by Civil Disobedience; undeterred also by an anxious post-war situation at home or by the difficulties of demobilization, the Imperial Parliament proceeded to embody in legislation the main recommendations of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report. The parliamentary situa-

tion was such as to encourage courageous, if not reckless legislation. The Coalition Government under the leadership of Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Bonar Law had recently (1918) been returned to power by an immense majority; the Liberal party was divided between the two sides of the House; the Socialists could offer no effective opposition, even had the legislation been less to their liking than it was; the Conservative revolt against Mr. Lloyd George, though foreshadowed, had not materialized. The Government had practically a free hand, and one of the firstfruits of that freedom was the passing of the *Government of India Act*.

This Act, as Sir John Simon has truly observed, 'is one of the most complicated constitutional instruments which has ever been devised'—the complication being largely due to the attempt 'at one and the same moment, both to expand the powers of the Provinces and to create representative institutions at the centre'.¹

About the Preamble, however, there is no ambiguity. The Preamble. It reaffirms, in the clearest possible terms, the 'declared policy' of 'responsible government in British India as an integral part of the Empire', and also the conditions implicit in the Declaration of 20 August 1917. They are: (i) Progress in giving effect to [the policy affirmed in 1917] can only be achieved by successive stages; (ii) 'the time and manner of each advance can be determined only by Parliament upon whom lies responsibility for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples'; (iii) 'the action of Parliament in such matters must be guided by the co-operation received from those on whom new opportunities of service will be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility'. Finally the Preamble declared that 'concurrently with the gradual development of self-governing institutions in the Provinces of India it is expedient to give to those Provinces in provincial matters

¹ Much the clearest exposition of it will be found in Sir J. Simon's *The Constitution of India* (Ludwig Mond Lecture, 1930).

the largest measure of independence of the Government of India which is compatible with the discharge by the latter of its own responsibilities'.

The language is cumbrous, but the meaning is quite clear. Nor can any thoughtful person now doubt that the statesmanlike method of tackling the problem would have been to confine the Act of 1919 entirely to Provincial Government; to watch for an adequate period the results of any experiments it was decided to make, and to propose no changes in the Central Government until the Provinces had proved themselves worthy of their new powers.

That this would have failed to satisfy 'advanced' opinion in India is true, but so did the scheme embodied in the Act. Nothing could have been colder than the reception given to the Act of 1919 by the Congress party.

Provincial Government.

As it was, the changes effected in Provincial Government were far more important than those in the Central Government. In the nine Governor's Provinces, government was henceforward to be based on the principle of Dyarchy, or a division of the functions of government into two sections. Certain subjects—such as police and the administration of justice, and irrigation and land revenue—were *reserved* for the exclusive jurisdiction of the Governor and his Executive Councillors, some Indian and some British, who, though official members of the provincial legislature, were responsible, not to it but solely to the Government. Other subjects, such as education, public health, agriculture, local government, public works, and like matters, were *transferred* to the control of ministers chosen from and responsible to the local legislature, or Legislative Council. The Legislative Councils were to contain at least 70 per cent. of elected members. It should be added that for the due performance of his functions in respect of the *reserved* subjects the Governor can, in the last resort, make financial and legislative provision against the will of the legislature.

It was contemplated that if the new system worked satisfactorily the range of transferred subjects should be

extended, until ultimately the whole administration should be handed over to responsible ministers, who, having proved faithful in few things might safely be entrusted with many. How far these hopes have been realized is told by the Statutory Commission, the appointment of which, after a period of ten years' experiment, was specifically provided for in the Act.

The changes effected by the Supreme Government, though considerable, were relatively unimportant. The principle of Dyarchy was not extended to the Supreme Government, to which forty-seven 'central' subjects, such as Defence, Foreign Relations, Relations with the Indian States, Customs, Coinage and Currency, Communications, Police and Civil and Criminal law, were by the Act reserved. Executive authority is still vested in the Viceroy and his Executive Council, consisting of seven heads of Departments, appointed by the Crown, and responsible not to it but to the Legislature.

Central
Govern-
ment.

The Central Legislature consists of two Houses—the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly or Lower House. The Council of State consists of 60 members, of whom 34 are elected on a very restricted franchise: the rest are nominated, and not more than 20 of them may be officials.

The Assembly contains a much larger majority of elected members—104 out of 144. They are directly elected by constituencies which, though enormously big, contain only $6\frac{1}{2}$ million electors—considerably less than a quarter of the electorate of the United Kingdom. The right of legislation, including supply, is vested ordinarily in the Legislature, but in order to prevent a deadlock in administration the Viceroy is empowered, when necessary, to override the will of the Legislature both in regard to grants of supply and ordinary legislation. Experience has proved the necessity for this regrettable but essential precautionary provision.

Similarly, the Supreme Government as a whole has powers of superintendence, direction, and control over the

Provincial Governments in respect of all the *reserved* subjects.

There has also been established, in connexion with the Supreme Government, an Indian Privy Council 'as a means of honouring and employing ripe wisdom and meritorious service'.

The scheme further provided for a Chamber of Princes to form a link between the Indian States and the British Government. Of the Ruling Princes, 108 are entitled to sit in the Chamber in their own right: 127 of the smaller States are represented by 12 members. Nothing could testify more eloquently to the confidence now reposed by the Paramount Power in the loyalty of the Native Princes than the institution of this Chamber. Formerly it was the policy of the British Raj to rule by dividing potential rivals. By the deliberate action of the Raj the Princes have now been encouraged to mutual consultation and common action.

This new and imposing constitutional scheme was formally inaugurated on 21 February 1921 at Delhi by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, on behalf of the King-Emperor. The Act of 1919 had done little, if anything, to conciliate the Congress party, who resolved to boycott the elections to the new Councils in 1920. In opening the Chamber, however, the Duke of Connaught took occasion 'to repudiate in the most emphatic manner the idea that the administration of India has been or ever can be based on principles of force or terrorism'.

Later in the same year the Prince of Wales visited India and was received with an enthusiasm which even Mr. Gandhi, despite his utmost endeavours, could only partially quell. The mere effort to do so did, however, provoke street conflicts, notably in Bombay, which caused serious loss of life. But the rope allowed by the Government to Mr. Gandhi was now running out. In 1922 he was arrested, tried, and sentenced to six years' imprisonment, though two years later, after a serious operation for appendicitis (when he wisely availed himself of European skill), he was released. For the next five years he lived in retirement.

Inauguration Ceremony.

The persistent agitation in British India could hardly have failed to cause some measure of disquietude and unrest among the Rulers of the Indian States. In the whole Empire there was no more loyal element than these Rulers. They had proved it again and again, and never more conclusively than in the World War. But the efforts of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report to disturb the contentment of the Indian peasantry, even if only partially successful, inevitably reacted upon the subjects of the Indian States. The Rulers also were naturally perturbed by the concessions to agitation embodied in the Act of 1919, and the persistent demand of Congress for complete 'Dominion Status'.

The
Indian
States
Com-
mittee.

What, if this were conceded, would be the position of the Princes *vis à vis* the new Dominion? To the King-Emperor their loyalty was unquestioned; their treaties were with him; to him they stood in a quasi-feudatory relation. Difficult and delicate as the relations between the Crown and the Princes must, at times, inevitably be, where would they stand with an Indian Parliament and Cabinet at Delhi? The changes demanded by the Indian Congress would necessarily raise, moreover, many technical questions affecting the Princes, as to which they desired enlightenment and reassurance.

Accordingly, at their request a small Committee was, in December 1927, appointed, under the chairmanship of Sir Harcourt Butler, a Civil Servant of long and varied experience. The Committee was instructed (i) to report upon the relationship between the Paramount Power and the Indian States with particular reference to the rights and obligations arising from: (a) treaties, engagements and sanads; and (b) usage, sufferance, and other causes; and (ii) to inquire into the financial and economic relations between British India and the States and to . . . make recommendations . . . for their adjustment'.

The Report of the Committee, published in 1929, did not give complete satisfaction to the Princes. In the task of defining Paramountcy the Committee confessed failure.

All they could say was, 'Paramountcy must remain paramount: it must fulfil its obligations. The Princes would continue to enjoy complete autonomy, so long as they governed their people well,'¹ and they would not be handed over to a new Indian 'Dominion' without their own consent. This was the vital point; on points of detail, and in regard to certain technical matters the Princes expressed themselves as dissatisfied with the Report, but since the meeting of the Round Table Conference these have been overshadowed (though not disposed of) by the larger problem of Federation, and do not, therefore, call for further comment.

Two points, however, emerge indisputably clear. On the one hand, all engagements made between the Crown and the Princes will be scrupulously fulfilled, nor will the Princes be called upon to surrender any portion of their autonomous rights except as part of a *voluntary* Federal pact: on the other hand, the Princes will have nothing to do with any proposals for the future government of India which do not 'proceed upon the initial basis of the British connexion',² and they are determined to remain 'unflinchingly staunch and loyal to the King-Emperor'.³

The Statutory Commission. Almost simultaneously with the appointment of the Indian States Committee the Royal Commission, provided for in the Act of 1919, was appointed, under the chairmanship of Sir John Simon, to inquire 'into the working of the system of government, the growth of education, and the development of representative institutions in British India', and to report 'as to whether and to what extent it is desirable to establish the principle of responsible government, or to extend, modify, or restrict the degree of responsible government then existing therein'.

Report of the Simon Commission. The Commission, consisting of seven members of the Imperial Parliament—two peers and five commoners—

¹ In the last ten years the Paramount Power had interfered in eighteen cases, mostly in the smaller States.

² Motion unanimously passed in Chamber of Princes (February 1929).

³ H.H. The Maharajah of Bikaner at Bombay (Sept. 1928).

paid two visits to India, the first lasting from 3 February 1928 to 31 March, and the second from 11 October 1928 to 13 April 1929. The Commission included no Indian representatives, but on arriving in India invited the two Houses of the Central Legislature to follow the example of the Imperial Parliament, and choose seven representatives from among their unofficial members to meet the British Commissioners in 'Joint Free Conference'. Each Provincial Legislature was invited to do likewise. The Legislative Assembly declined the invitation; but the Council of State elected three members of its body, the Viceroy added a fourth member of Council, and five members of the Assembly, and this Indian Central Committee co-operated with the British Commissioner and with Provincial Committees, similarly appointed in all but one of the Governor's Provinces. The Report of the Indian Central Committee was presented to Parliament in 1929 (Cmd. 3451), and the Reports of the Provincial Committees were presented in 1930 as volume iii of the Statutory Commission Report (Cmd. 3572).

The latter Report was issued in June 1930 in two parts, and was followed by no fewer than fourteen supplementary volumes containing memoranda submitted by the Government of India and the Governor's Provinces, official and non-official evidence, &c.

Between the publication of the two parts of the Report, there was a fortnight's interval designed, and most wisely, to give the British public an opportunity of studying the conditions of the problem presented to the Commissioners, and of surveying the existing constitutional, administrative, financial, and educational systems before being permitted to learn, or called upon to judge, the recommendations put forward by the Commission. As to education, the task of conducting a special inquiry into the progress made in this field had been delegated to an Auxiliary Committee, and the results of their investigations were published with an Interim Report of the Commission in October 1929 (Cmd. 3407).

The first volume of the Commission's main Report (Cmd. 3568) contained a masterly survey, historical and analytical, of conditions in British India. It laid bare certain 'stubborn facts which no amount of rhetoric or appeal to abstract principles can alter'.¹ Nor could there be any two opinions as to the value of this survey. The reception accorded to volume i of the Report was, consequently, remarkable for its unanimity and cordiality.

General Principles. It was, unfortunately, otherwise in regard to volume ii (Cmd. 3569) which, after explaining the general principles upon which the Commissioners based their proposals, proceeded to set forth those proposals in detail. Among the general principles two or three stand out pre-eminent. The first is that 'Indian nationalism is a phenomenon which cannot be disregarded by the rulers either of British India or of the Indian States'. A second affirms that it is 'only under a federal system that the sentiment underlying the [nationalist] movement can be given effective expression.' The ultimate Constitution must, therefore, have regard to 'a future development when India as a whole, not merely British India, will take her place among the constituent States of the Commonwealth of Nations united under the Crown.' Any new Constitution should, moreover, avoid rigidity and 'should as far as possibly contain within itself provision for its own development'. Nor should it necessarily be too slavishly imitative of the English Constitution.

'British parliamentarism in India is,' as the Commissioners justly observe, 'a translation, and in even the best translations the essential meaning is apt to be lost. . . . While the principles and practice of the British parliamentary system are accepted by educated Indians as the best example of democracy in action, they are being applied in a country where the conditions and mental habit of the people are very different.'

Recommendations. The specific recommendations of the Commission as to the future government of India may be roughly and briefly

¹ For a summary of these 'stubborn facts' cf. *supra*, pp. 13-20.

summarized as follows; as regards Provincial Governments:—

(i) The abolition of dyarchy; (ii) the introduction of 'Responsible Government', with Cabinets designed on the British model, but with a reservation of emergency powers to the Governor; (iii) an extended franchise for the Provincial Legislatures but a continuance of Communal Electorates for the protection of important minorities 'unless and until agreement can be reached upon a better method'; and (iv) a provision for constitutional revision by the Legislatures, subject always to the protection of the rights of minorities.

'Responsibility' thus fully and frankly conceded to the Provincial Governments is not, however, to extend to the Central Executive which is to remain in the hands of the Viceroy and of ministers responsible, as, at present, to him.

The Central Legislature is to consist of two Houses: (i) the Legislative Assembly to be henceforth styled the 'Federal Assembly' and to be reconstituted on the basis of the representation of the Provinces and other areas in British India according to population. Members representing Governor's Provinces are to be elected by Provincial Councils by the method of proportional representation—thus ensuring the representation of minority communities. In other areas election is to be 'by methods appropriate in each case'. The Federal Assembly will continue to include official members consisting of 'such members of the Governor-General's Council as sat in the Lower House, together with twelve other nominated members'.

The Upper House or 'Council of State' is to retain its present title and its existing functions and to consist, as at present, of nominated members and members elected by a process of indirect election by the Provincial Second Chambers, where they exist, and elsewhere by the Provincial Councils.

The constitutional structure is to be crowned by a Council for Greater India, endowed with 'consultative and deliberative functions' in regard to a scheduled list of

'matters of common concern' to the States and British India. This Council is definitely designed as a beginning in the process which may lead to the Federation of Greater India, but the Commissioners emphatically endorse the caution uttered by the Indian States (Butler) Committee against forcing the pace towards Federation.

The recommendations of the Commissioners in regard to Finance, to the High Courts, the Civil and other Services, Defence and the Military establishments can only be usefully studied in the Report itself. Burma, it should be added, is to be separated from India.

That the Report of seven Commissioners, representing all three parties in the State, should have been unanimous is surely a remarkable tribute to the tact and skill of its Chairman.

Recep- In India the Report is said to have been 'condemned
tion of unread'. If that be the case there must have been a vast
Report. amount of uneconomic expenditure.¹

Condemned its recommendations undeniably were by the extremists, though they were generally welcomed by the minority communities. As to the Government of India—the Viceroy in Council—their views, were published, on 14 November 1930, in a Blue Book known as the 'Simla Dispatch' (Cmd. 3700). They accepted as an ultimate ideal an All-India Federation, while laying perhaps even greater stress upon the 'ultimate' than did the Statutory Commissioners; but the main divergence between the views of the Government of India and the Commissioners concerned the structure of the Central Executive and its relation to the Central Legislature. The Commissioners while condemning, and proposing to abolish, 'dyarchy' in the Provinces, had appeared to recommend something like it at the Centre. Lord Irwin and his colleagues expressed the opinion that the proposals of the Commission 'can hardly produce the strong Central Government which they desire to see', though the difference between the 'dualism'

¹ No fewer than 16,000 copies of vol. i and 20,000 of vol. ii have been sent to India.

preferred by the Viceroy in Council and the 'dyarchy' attributed to the Commissioners is rather difficult to discern. But as the work of the Commissioners drew to a close, they had been impelled to make suggestions to His Majesty's Government, the adoption of which was destined to modify profoundly the whole situation, and, in a sense, to sidetrack their own Report.

In the course of their investigations the Commissioners had become more and more 'impressed by the impossibility of considering the constitutional problems of British India without taking into account the relations between British India and the Indian States'. But as the Chairman of the Commission pointed out in a letter to the Prime Minister,¹ it would be necessary if the Government approved 'this possibly extended interpretation' of the terms of reference to revise the scheme of procedure to be followed after the presentation of the Report. The Commissioners suggested the

'setting up of some sort of Conference after the Reports of the Statutory Commission and the Indian Central Committee have been made, considered, and published . . . and that in this Conference His Majesty's Government should meet both representatives of British India and representatives of the States . . . for the purpose of seeking the greatest possible measure of agreement for the final proposals which it would be the duty of His Majesty's Government to submit to Parliament.'²

Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, having consulted the leaders of the other parties, concurred, on their behalf and on that of His Majesty's Government, in the suggestion made by the Statutory Commissioners.³

On 31 October 1929 the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, having lately returned from England, where he had held 'prolonged consultation' with His Majesty's Government, made an historic announcement:

'In view of the doubts which have been expressed both in Great Britain and India regarding the interpretation to be

¹ 16 Oct. 1929, and cf. Official Report of Parliamentary Debates, vol. 260, no. 20 (2 December 1931).

² Letter to Sir John Simon 25 Oct. 1929, *op. Report*, I. xxiv.

placed on the intentions of the British Government in enacting the Statute of 1919 I am authorized, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, to state clearly that in their judgement it is implicit in the declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion Status.¹

The Viceroy at the same time announced the decision of the Government to summon the Conference referred to above. The Conference assembled on 12 November 1930.

¹ *Gazette of India Extraordinary*, 31 Oct. 1929.

XVII

THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE AND AFTER

THIS book has been concerned with the genesis and development of a problem unique in the history of Political Institutions. It opened with a reference to the attempt to work out a solution of that problem by means of a conference between representatives of all classes and interests in India and of all parties in the Imperial Parliament. With a further reference to the work of that 'Round Table' Conference (1930-1) it may appropriately close. It must be said that in the first session of the Conference (November 1930-January 1931) the Indian National Congress Party was not officially represented, since it had refused to participate save on the condition that the Conference should be called 'not to discuss when Dominion Status should be established, but to frame a scheme of Dominion Status for India'. Apart from the ambiguity attaching to the term 'Dominion Status',¹ it is evident that no such condition could be accepted by those who were responsible for the summoning of the Conference. In the second session of the Conference (September-December 1931) the Congress Party was represented—most faithfully and characteristically by Mr. Gandhi.

Apart, however, from the partial and temporary exception of the Congress Party, the Round Table Conference has been throughout representative of all parties in India and Great Britain; but it is no disparagement to other delegations to say that the Conference is memorable, and will be accounted historically significant, mainly by reason of the strong delegation representative of the Indian States. Without the free assent of the Princes there can be no final solution of the problem which forms

The
Indian
States.

¹ It has been repeatedly asserted that the *Statute of Westminster* (December) supplies a definition. It defines *Dominion* but only 'In this Act' and *per enumerationem*. Not even the *Statute of Westminster* attempts to define *Dominion Status*.

the subject of this book. On that point no one has been more emphatic than Lord Irwin.

'I make no secret of my view,' he said, speaking in June 1929, 'that in any proposals that may be made it is essential on every ground of policy and equity, to carry the free assent of the Ruling Princes of India, and that any suggestion that the treaty rights which the Princes are accustomed to regard as sacrosanct can be lightly set aside is only calculated to postpone the solution that we seek.'

More authoritative, more solemn in its occasion, and more precise in its terms, was the assurance given on behalf of the King-Emperor by the Duke of Connaught when in 1921 he inaugurated the Chamber of Princes. The King-Emperor's Proclamation read by him included the following passage:

'In my former Proclamation I repeated the assurance, given on many occasions by my Royal Predecessors and myself, of my determination ever to maintain unimpaired the privileges, rights, and dignities of the Princes of India. The Princes may rest assured that this pledge remains inviolate and inviolable.'

Nothing has happened since 1921 to impair in any degree the inviolability of that pledge. Much on the contrary has happened to accentuate its significance.

In order to appreciate the significance of these statements, it may be convenient to indicate briefly the present position of the Indian States and their Rulers.

Place in
Indian
Polity.

The States are not, as a rule, of any great antiquity. Only a few, such as Mysore, Tangore, and the Rajput State, are superior in antiquity to the British Raj; most of them, as already indicated, arose on the ruins of the Mogul Empire in the eighteenth century. Numbering 562 in all they occupy two-fifths of the area of India and contribute some 80,000,000 to its total population. Hyderabad, the largest of them (82,700 square miles), is nearly as big as Great Britain, though its population is less than 13,000,000. Kashmir, as large if not larger than Hyderabad, possesses only a quarter of its population. Mysore, with rather less

than 6,000,000 inhabitants, has an area of 29,460 square miles.

Three-fourths of the total population of the Indian States are concentrated in the 108 States the rulers of which are members of the Chamber of Princes in their own right. Of these, forty of the most important 'have actual Treaties with the Paramount Power. A larger number have some form of engagement or "Sanad", i.e. a concession or acknowledgement of authority or privilege, generally coupled with conditions proceeding from the Paramount Power. The remainder enjoy in some form or another recognition of their status by the Crown.'¹ The rulers of 127 smaller States are represented in the Chamber of Princes by twelve members of their order elected by themselves. The remaining 327 'States' have an aggregate population of less than one million and vary in size down to 'Estates' of a few acres owned by 'petty chieftains and others who exercise no jurisdictional powers'. Geographically the States do not form a compact territory but 'dovetail into the various provinces of British India'; their frontiers have, as a rule, been arbitrarily determined, and the main arteries of communication constantly pass in and out of State territory. Nor are the States, as a rule, homogeneous in respect either of creed or race. In some cases, as in that of 'our faithful ally' H.E.H. the Nizam of Hyderabad, a Moslem Prince rules a population predominantly Hindu; in others, as in Kashmir, there is a Hindu Prince while the majority of his subjects are Moslem.

There is not less variety in the internal government of the States and in the degree of administrative efficiency they have severally attained. In Mysore, for example, the Maharajah has called into being a regular bicameral legislature: a Legislative Council and a Representative Assembly. In Hyderabad there is a small Legislative Council, predominantly official in composition. Baroda has, in addition to an Executive Council, a Legislative Council of twenty-seven members, of whom ten are elected.

¹ Simon Commission, i. 85, and cf. Indian States Committee, pp. 12 seq.

No fewer than 30 of the States have, as the Indian States Committee pointed out, 'established legislative Councils, most of which are at present invariably of a consultative nature only; 40 have constituted High Courts more or less on British Indian models; 34 have separated executive from judicial functions; 56 have a fixed privy purse; 46 have started a regular graded civil list of officials; and 54 have pension or provident fund schemes'. Other States, on the contrary, are almost medieval, not to say patriarchal, in their administrative machinery. The establishment in 1921 of the Chamber of Princes has unquestionably done something to diminish the constitutional disparities and to educate the more backward rulers up to the level of the more enlightened, but the disparity nevertheless persists. It were idle to pretend that this disparity does not present a serious obstacle to any scheme of Federation. To the success of Federal government few things are more essential than some degree of constitutional homogeneity, a certain community of political experience. These conditions are conspicuously lacking in the Indian States. Of the units which may go, in the future, to the making of a federalized India some have had no experience whatever of anything but autocracy; some have learnt to lisp the lessons of liberty; none has passed through any adequate apprenticeship in the most difficult of all political arts.

In the attitude of the States themselves, there is, on the other hand, no ambiguity. The Report of the Statutory Commission lays great emphasis upon the 'extremely important conclusion' reached by the Harcourt Butler Committee regarding the demand of the States,

'that without their own agreement the rights and obligations of the Paramount Power should not be assigned to persons who are not under its control—for instance, an Indian Government in British India responsible to an Indian Legislature. If any government in the nature of a Dominion government should be constituted in British India, such a government would clearly be a new government resting on a new and written constitution.

... We feel bound, however, to draw attention to the really grave apprehension of the Princes on this score, and to record our strong opinion that in view of the historical nature of the relationship between the Paramount Power and the Princes, the latter should not be transferred without their own agreement to a relationship with a new government in British India responsible to an Indian Legislature.'¹

That paragraph unquestionably reflected with complete accuracy the attitude of the Indian Princes when the Butler Committee reported in March 1929—a date almost coincident with the final departure from India of the Simon Commission.

But before the Simon Commission reported, the Maharajah of Bikaner had made his historic pronouncement. Addressing the Legislative Assembly of his own State on 19 December 1929 he said:

Declaration of H.H. the Maharajah of Bikaner.

'I look forward to the day when a United India will be enjoying Dominion Status under the aegis of the King-Emperor, and the Princes and States will be in the fullest enjoyment of what is their due—as a solid federal body in a position of absolute equality with the federal provinces of British India.' 'Federation', he added, 'is a word which has no terrors for the Princes and Governments of the States.'

The word may have no terrors for them; nor the general idea of federation. But to work out the details of a constructive scheme was to prove, as we shall see, no easy task.

The Statutory Commission presented their Report in June 1930. On 12 November of the same year the King-Emperor inaugurated the Round Table Conference at a public session in the Royal Gallery of the House of Lords.

Round Table Conference.

It might have been expected that the Conference which owed its existence to the suggestion of the Statutory Commissioners would have taken their Report as the starting-point and basis of its deliberations. Nothing of the sort. The Report of a Commission appointed under the express provisions of the Act of 1919, as amended in 1927, was contemptuously shelved alike by the Government and by the Conference.

¹ Indian States Committee, pp. 31, 32.

It is proper to add that the situation had been modified by the momentous pronouncement of Lord Irwin as to Dominion Status, and by the extraordinary quickening of the pace towards a federal solution of the Constitutional problem.

All-India Federation. Hitherto the question of an All-India Federation had been most cautiously and tentatively approached.

Montagu-Chelmsford Report on Federation. The Montagu-Chelmsford Report hardly did more than hint at federalism as a remote possibility. Yet for more than one reason the passage embodying the hint should be recalled:

'Our conception of the eventual future of India is a sisterhood of States, self-governing in all matters of purely local or provincial interest. . . . Over this congeries of States would preside a central government *increasingly representative of and responsible to the people of all of them*: dealing with matters, both internal and external, of common interest to the whole of India; acting as arbiter in inter-State relations, and representing the interests of all India on equal terms with the self-governing units of the British Empire. In this picture there is a place also for the Native States.' (Para. 349.)

Certain words in the above passage have been italicized because they raise (perhaps unintentionally) a point of extreme delicacy. If, between the two sessions of the Round Table Conference, there has been a cooling in the enthusiasm for federalism among certain Princes, it may be ascribed to the perception of the fact that a Central Legislature, framed on federal lines, may claim to be '*representative of and responsible to*' not only the peoples of British India, but the subjects of the Indian Princes. That any ruling Prince would tolerate such a limitation of his own autocracy is hardly imaginable. Yet some limitation of the powers of the component States is of the very essence of Federalism. But to this point we shall return.

Indian States Committee. The approach of the Indian States Committee to the question of Federation was at least as cautious as that of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report:

'We have left the door open', they reported, 'to closer union.

There is nothing in our proposals to prevent the adoption of some form of federal union. . . . But it has been borne in upon us with increasing power, as we have studied the problems presented to us, that there is need for great caution in dealing with any question of federation at the present time, so passionately are the Princes as a whole attached to the maintenance *in its entirety and unimpaired of their individual sovereignty within their States.*

Once again attention may be drawn to the italicized words.

With the Reports of their predecessors before them the Statutory Commissioners dealt in considerable detail with the Federal solution. In the course of their investigations they became impressed, as we have seen, with the unwisdom, if not the impossibility, of framing a scheme for the government of British India without reference to the relations which might and should develop between British India and the Indian States. In view of the geographical unity of the Indian peninsula, in view of the loyal acceptance of the suzerainty of the King-Emperor, in view of the steady growth of economic unity and of social problems common to India as a whole, above all by reason of the fact that it is only under a federal system that the sentiment underlying the nationalist movement can be given effective expression, the Commissioners were driven towards the idea of an All-India Federation. The day of its realization might be distant, but they were determined 'to do nothing to hinder but everything to help its arrival, for already there are emerging problems that can only be settled satisfactorily by co-operation between British India and the States'.

Simon
Commis-
sion.

'It might be possible,' they proceeded, 'to visualize the future of federation in India as the bringing into relationship of two separate federations, one composed of the elements which make up British India, the other of the Indian States. We do not wish in any way to be dogmatic on a matter which must be decided by those concerned. While we have given much attention to the subject, we have not received evidence from the Rulers of the Indian States. We recognize that it is one of the matters

which may be discussed when the proposed conference takes place. . . . We are inclined ourselves to think that the easier and more speedy approach to the desired end can be obtained by reorganizing the constitution of India on a federal basis in such a way that individual States or groups of States may have the opportunity of entering as soon as they wish to do so. It appears to us that the alternative method would reduce progress to the pace of the slowest. Furthermore, we do not believe that in matters of federal concern the States will be always ranged on one side and British India on the other. On the contrary, there are matters in which the interests of particular States and Provinces more clearly coincide. Whatever may be the ultimate decision, it seems to us that the reorganization of British India on a federal basis will prepare the way for it.'

To this conclusion they were driven partly by the unprecedented dimensions of the problem presented by British India alone. The size even of British India renders a unitary Constitution unthinkable:

'To imagine that a constitutional structure suitable for 45 millions of British people mainly urban, will serve equally well for 250 millions of Indians spread over a sub-continent and living in half a million villages is unreasonable. If self-government is to be a reality it must be applied to units of a suitable size. . . .'

They recognize the difficulty caused by the absence of natural units out of which to build a Federation, and by the great diversity of conditions prevailing in the existing administrative areas—areas 'which have grown up almost haphazard'.¹ None the less, all the more, indeed, do they conclude that 'it is only in a federal structure that sufficient elasticity can be obtained for the union of elements of diverse internal constitution and of communities at very different stages of development and culture'.²

The Round Table Conference was not many hours old before it became manifest that one question overshadowed all others. Delegates who represented 'advanced'

¹ See *supra*, chapter i, p. 13 seq.

² *Report*, ii, p. 14.

opinion in British India continued to press for the immediate concession of the principle of 'Responsibility' in the Central Executive: other matters such as Defence, the control of external relations, and, above all, communal differences, were by no means ignored, but the interest of the public and the activities of the Conference were quickly concentrated with amazing unanimity upon the 'construction of a scheme of All-India Federation'.

Federalism as a form of polity bristles with difficulties, whatever may be the particular circumstances of the case to which the federal principle is to be applied. These difficulties were bound to obtrude themselves, in exceptional degree, where, as in India, some of the fundamental conditions essential to the success of any federal scheme do not naturally exist, and where it is no easy matter artificially to create them. To the absence, in the case of India, of natural or historical units, such as have formed the basis of all other federal schemes known to the modern world, attention has already been drawn. This, be it repeated, is a primary condition, and the absence of it accentuates the difficulty, never slight, of distributing the powers of government between the central and local authorities. The manner of distributing those powers, and the decision taken as to the location of the residual powers, determine the whole character of the federal scheme, and largely contribute to its success or failure.

Elaborate reports on this and other points, such as the structure and composition of the Legislature, the composition, character, powers, and responsibility of the Executive, the Federal Court, and Federal Finance were presented to the Conference by the Federal Structure Committee, over which the Lord Chancellor (Lord Sankey) presided.

But the results of prolonged explorations and much expert drafting were hardly commensurate with the pains bestowed upon them. The statement made to the Conference at the close of its second session on behalf of His Majesty's Government by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mac-

Results.

donald),¹ and subsequently endorsed by both Houses of Parliament, was remarkable rather as a statement of difficulties encountered than of results achieved. The difficulties might have been diminished, though not removed; the results might have been more definite and imposing, had the Conference followed the wise precedents of the Conventions which produced the Federal Constitution of the United States, and the Union of South Africa, and sat behind closed doors and declined the help of shorthand reporters.

That the Conference was wholly barren of results none but a cynic would affirm. Mutual intercourse between men of different races and opposed views, between Englishmen, Indians, and Anglo-Indians, between Moslems, Hindus, and Sikhs, unquestionably created a more genial atmosphere and removed some misunderstandings. No fair-minded Indian who took part in the Conference could henceforward entertain any doubts as to the entire good faith and goodwill of the representatives of all English parties, though he might still remain sceptical of their competence to follow the working of minds much more subtle and elusive than their own, or to solve a peculiarly obstinate problem. Agreement was reached on some minor points, but, as is clear from the White Paper,² on none of the major ones.

The basic principles of a settlement were indeed formulated. It was generally agreed that an All-India Federation offered 'the only hopeful solution of India's constitutional problem'; that in addition to the concession of autonomy with full responsibility in the Provinces, the Central Executive should be responsible to the Legislature *if both were constituted on an All-India federal basis*; the necessity of statutory safeguards 'for meeting the needs of the transitional period', and the desirability of devising measures for the protection of religious minorities. As to safeguards nothing could be more explicit or more concise than Sir Samuel Hoare's³ summary:

¹ Cmd. 3972.

² Secretary of State, 1931-

'First of all, until India is in a position to defend herself, our command of the Army must be clear and undisputed, and our control of foreign affairs must be reserved. Secondly, our relations with the Princes must be retained by the Crown. Financial stability must be effectively safeguarded, and so ultimately must be internal security. Minorities must be protected, there must be no unfair economic or commercial discrimination against the British trader, and the rights of Services recruited by the Secretary of State must be safeguarded.' 'These safeguards', added the Secretary of State, 'are not shackles upon India's future; they are rather stays without which the new Indian Constitution will lack the sure and safe stability that it will so much need.'¹

Condi-
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and
Reserva-
tions.

Admirably explicit as is this affirmation of general principles, the White Paper makes it pitifully clear that at the close of the second session of the Conference there had been virtually no advance towards a settlement of all-important details.

'There is still difference of opinion . . . as to the composition and powers of the Federal Legislature, and . . . owing to the absence of a settlement of the key question of how to safeguard the minorities under a responsible Central Government, the Conference has been unable to discuss effectively the nature of the Federal Executive and its relationship with the Legislature. Again, it has not yet been possible for the States to settle amongst themselves their place in the Federation and their mutual relationships within it.'

Well might the Prime Minister add that 'our common purpose will not be served by ignoring these facts'. They cannot be ignored; and unless and until the difficulties they present are solved there can be no real advance towards a solution of the Constitutional problem in India. If, indeed, impatient politicians in India and in England would condescend to read the lessons of history and listen to the teachings of experience, they would realize that of all political injunctions the most important is *festina lente*, that more haste generally means less speed, that the failure of Joseph II, the most conspicuous among the *illumineds* of

¹ *Hansard*, vol. 260, no. 20, cols. 1212-13.

the eighteenth century, was rightly ascribed to his habit of taking the second step before he had taken the first; in fine, that the only safe road towards an All-India Federation is by way of provincial autonomy.

Indian Nationalism. That there is a great wave of nationalism sweeping over the world must be obvious to the most careless observer. That India is now engulfed by it is indisputable. Whether the tide has reached the 'inarticulate masses' of Indian peasants, whether Mr. Gandhi is entitled to speak for them, whether the political agitation is confined to the Western-educated Hindus and the commercialized Parsis of Bombay, are questions which can be answered only by those who have an intimate knowledge of India. But whatever the answers may be, recent events in India, sufficiently patent, if not in their entirety revealed, are of ill-omen to the world. If a wave of nationalism can be discerned by all, so also can a wave of terrorism and outrage.¹ It is, moreover, evident that among some of the Princes there is not unnatural hesitation about acceptance of the primary implications of Federalism. Nor is it easy to dissociate the increase of serious crime from the notorious slackening of the reins of authority, and the rapid deterioration in the efficiency of administration. The strong hand of the Executive has of late plainly weakened. Nor is the reason far to seek. A recent and exceptionally competent writer has blurted out the truth: 'the administration has unquestionably been subordinated to policy'.² Precisely. As an Indian of advanced views pertinently put it to Sir Harcourt Butler: 'Some of your politicians say "Govern or get out". But you can't get out, and apparently you can't or you won't govern.' Dr. Stubbs taught that 'Lack of governance' produced the civil wars in England in the fifteenth century. Like causes are apt to produce like results. A weakening at the centre, at Delhi and Simla, has meant nervelessness at all points of the circumference. If

¹ Written in December 1931. Terrorist crimes numbered 19 in 1929; 74 in 1930; 118 in the interval between the two sessions of the Round Table Conference (Jan.-Sept. 1931).

² Sir Harcourt Butler, *India Insistent* (London, 1931), p. viii.

local administrators fail to deal promptly and boldly with local disorder, the blame should be put on the shoulders of the Central Executive. General Dyer is broken for acting; Mr. Sale is censured for inaction. The real culprits are neither at Amritsar nor at Cawnpore.

Nevertheless, despite the prevalence of disquieting symptoms, those best able to judge of the situation in India hold that there are no substantial grounds for pessimism or defeatism. The Round Table Conference, however slight its positive achievements, should at least have banished from all reasonable minds any suspicion of bad faith on the part of the British Government.

Every pledge given to India will be fulfilled; but, as we have seen, the pledges which were given in 1917, and reaffirmed in 1919, were strictly conditional. The conditions have not yet been satisfied. It is, therefore, eminently desirable that they should be widely advertised in India, and that it should be made clear that they will not be waived. The Statutory Commissioners kept them steadily in mind. The fulfilment of them was implicit in their recommendations. If events have already rendered obsolete some of those recommendations in regard to the Central Government, if the march towards the federal goal, envisaged by them as distant, has been unexpectedly rapid, if the risks incidental to the concession of responsible Executive at the centre have been sensibly diminished by linking it inseparably to Federalism, the validity of the conditions have been in no wise impaired. It still remains true that progress in the development of self-governing institutions

'can only be achieved by successive stages'; that 'the British Government and the Government of India . . . must be the judges of the time and measure of each advance, and they must be guided by the co-operation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility.' (Declaration of 20 Aug. 1917.)

The Constitution of 1919, with provincial dyarchy, has

been in operation only for a decade. The Statutory Commissioners recommended, not, it would seem, without some misgivings, that dyarchy in the Provinces should give place to almost unrestricted responsibility. The conditions of the Declaration of 1917, embodied in the Act of 1919, cannot be fulfilled until the Provincial Executives have proved themselves worthy of the responsibility with which the Statutory Commission recommended Parliament to entrust them.

'I look upon this Constitution-building as likely to be a very very long job . . . the slower we go the less likely are we to make mistakes. . . . After all, we are building for a long future. What is a matter of a month, or a year, or five years in building up a Constitution for India. . . .'

So spake Sir Robert Hamilton, one of the Liberal representatives at the Round Table Conference, and now Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies in the House of Commons (12 March 1931). They are the words of wisdom. Neither Federalism nor 'Responsible' Government is an easy form of government to work. Neither can be worked with any measure of success except by men who have served a long apprenticeship in the most difficult of arts. That apprenticeship can be best served by Indians in the Provinces.

XVIII

EPILOGUE

'IN thinking of her work in India Great Britain may look back proudly, but she must also anxiously look forward.' A proud record.
So wrote a great historian of British India towards the close of the last century. This book will have been written wholly in vain if there should linger in the mind of the reader any doubt as to the truth of the first half of Hunter's proposition. Proudly we may look back. Preceding chapters, though presenting no more than an outline sketch, should at least have sufficed to show that the English in India have been confronted by a unique problem. That the attempt to solve it should have revealed some errors of judgement was inevitable; but those errors have been due less to a deficiency in goodwill than to an excess of benevolence; perhaps to some lack of imagination, perhaps to a failure adequately to appreciate the relativity of the teachings of Political Science, but above all to a genuine anxiety to share with our Indian fellow-subjects the privileges we ourselves enjoy. Generous errors.
Macaulay's famous Minute on Education (1835) is a case in point. The educational policy he initiated is now generally admitted to have been based upon a grave error. The consequences of that initial blunder have been deplorable and are not yet exhausted. But the motive which inspired the policy was generous—a desire to share with the youth of India the rich inheritance of English literature, to admit them to the storehouse of English political philosophy, to prepare them to play their part as citizens in a Commonwealth organized on the English model. The Englishman of to-day is less self-satisfied than were the Victorians; a series of shocks have somewhat shaken his complacency; he is no longer convinced that he possesses a monopoly of political wisdom or of aptitude for commerce. Consequently he is less certain that his duty lies in conferring

English institutions upon the rest of the world, and particularly upon that large part of it for which he is immediately responsible.

But if our fathers were in error, their error was not merely pardonable but praiseworthy. There is no reason to accept as accurate the amusing description given by Mr. Wells of the Englishman's dilemma:

'The English rule in India', he wrote in *The New Machiavelli*, 'is surely one of the most extraordinary accidents that has ever happened in history. We are there like a man who has fallen off a ladder on to the neck of an elephant and doesn't know what to do or how to get down. . . . In some manner we shall have to come out of India. We have had our chance and we have demonstrated nothing but the appalling dullness of our national imagination. We are not good enough to do anything with India.'

So far from not being 'good enough to do anything with India', we have been perhaps over-anxious to do good, and have thus brought upon ourselves the Nemesis of benevolence. Take social reform. No humane government could look on unmoved at some of the cruel rites practised in the name of religion by the Hindus. Yet those rites are as sacred to them as are the Sacraments of the Church to Christians. To interfere with them was to engender suspicion and provoke unrest.

Foreign critics. Foreign critics are better able, perhaps, than Englishmen to view these things in perspective. That must be my excuse for quoting one or two of them. The Comte de Montalembert wrote in 1855 as follows:

Montalembert. 'For every man who loves his fellowman, who believes in the legitimate progress of the human race, who welcomes the increasing happiness of the many, what a consoling and marvellous spectacle is that of the English dominion in India. Its history in those regions is certainly not without stain. . . . But everything considered and allowing a large amount of evil, we may boldly affirm that history gives no example of a conquest so completely turned to the good of the vanquished.'

Leroy-Beaulieu. Another Frenchman may be cited. M. Leroy-Beaulieu

wrote: 'La disparition d'une souveraineté européenne aux Indes serait un malheur et pour le pays et pour la civilisation en général.'¹ Such testimonies are the more remarkable when it is remembered that the countrymen of Duplex had little reason to be over-tender in judging the countrymen of Clive.

The views of a typical American coincide with those of representative Frenchmen. Some twenty years ago President Roosevelt said:

'The English administration of India is a greater feat than any performed under the Roman Empire. . . . Undoubtedly India is a less pleasant place than it was formerly for the heads of tyrannical states. There is now little or no room in it for the successful freebooter, chieftains and despots who lived in gorgeous splendour, while under their cruel rule the immense mass of their countrymen festered in sodden misery. But the mass of the people have been, and are, far better off than ever before, far better off than they would be now if English control were overthrown or withdrawn. Indeed, if English control were now withdrawn from India, the whole peninsula would become a chaos of blood and violence . . . every true friend of humanity should realize that the part which England has played in India has been of immeasurable advantage to India and to the honour and profit of civilization, and should feel profound satisfaction at the stability and permanence of English rule.'²

President
Roosevelt.

Finally, we may quote the concise aphorism of M. Paul Boell: 'The question is not whether England has a right to keep India, but rather whether she has a right to leave it.'³

M. Paul
Boell.

She has clearly no right to leave it, until her task has been accomplished, and nothing would contribute more to its accomplishment than to make public proclamation of the warning uttered by one of the greatest of English pro-consuls twenty years ago.

¹ *La Colonisation*, ii. 418. *ap.* Cromer.

² Speech by the President of the U.S.A. at the celebration of the diamond jubilee of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Africa at New York, 17 Jan. 1909.

³ *L'Inde et le Problème Indien*, p. 289. *ap.* Cromer.

Lord Cromer's warning. Writing at the time (1909) of the Morley-Minto reforms Lord Cromer expressed general agreement with the policy of associating Indians with ourselves in the task of administration. But he added this impressive warning.

'It will be well for England, better for India, and best of all for the cause of progressive civilization in general, if it be clearly understood from the outset that, however liberal may be the concessions which have now (1909) been made, and which at any future time may be made, we have not the slightest intention of abandoning our Indian possessions and that it is highly improbable that any such intention will be entertained by our posterity. The foundation-stone of Indian reform must be the steadfast maintenance of British supremacy. . . . It may be that at some future and far distant time we shall be justified . . . in handing over the torch of progress and civilization in India to those whom we have ourselves civilized. All that can be said at present is that, until human nature entirely changes, and until racial and religious passions disappear from the face of the earth, the relinquishment of that torch would almost certainly lead to its extinction.'¹

The Communal Deadlock That warning is as timely to-day as when it was uttered. Recent events have made it unmistakably clear that our task in India is not yet accomplished. Nothing, indeed, has done more to reveal to Englishmen and to the world the naked truth as to the Indian situation than the Round Table Conference. We are forbidden to describe that Conference as a failure. Cynics might well proclaim it as having, beyond all their expectations, succeeded. All men of goodwill hoped—some of them against hope—that the Conference would discover some solution of the Communal problem. It has, on the contrary, ended in a deadlock. It has indeed for the first time revealed, perhaps for the first time produced, a united front among all the minorities of India (except the Sikhs) against the arrogant pretensions of Brahmanism. As Lord Meston has admirably put it:

'Behind and below all that [the Conference] has accomplished,

¹ *Ancient and Modern Imperialism*, p. 127, Murray (1909).

there remains stark and unanswered the one vital question . . . When we abandon the governing of India, to whom are we going to hand it over, to the Brahmin or to the people?'

Failure to answer, nay, refusal to tackle that question has rendered wholly academic the discussion of abandonment. Even were it otherwise we could still look back proudly. British brains, British enterprise, and British capital have, in a material sense, transformed the face of India. Means of communication have been developed: innumerable bridges, over 40,000 miles of railway, 70,000 miles of metalled roads, testify to the skill and industry of British engineers. Irrigation works on a stupendous scale have brought 30,000,000 acres under cultivation, and thus greatly added to the agricultural wealth of a country which still lives mainly by agriculture. But, on the other hand, the process of industrialization has already begun. The mills of Bombay have become dangerous competitors to Lancashire, and the Indian jute industry is threatening the prosperity of Dundee. Thanks to improved sanitation (much resented by the more ignorant beneficiaries), to a higher standard of living, to irrigation, to canalization, to the development of transport, and to carefully thought-out schemes for relief work, famines, which by their regular recurrence formerly presented a perennial problem to humane administrators, have now virtually disappeared. To have conquered the menace of famine in the face of greater longevity, of diminished death-rate, and the suppression of war, is a remarkable achievement for which India is wholly indebted to British administration.

Economic
develop-
ment.

It might well happen that India, abandoned once more to her own resources, would furnish a striking vindication of the truth of Malthusian doctrine; that the 'positive checks'—war, vice, misery, and disease—would again begin to operate, and that by this means the pressure of population upon subsistence would be averted. Under British rule that pressure has been averted by means less painful. The standard of living, though not high, has steadily risen;

subsistence has more than kept pace with a rapid increase in population.

Good government and self-government. The material benefit accruing to India from British rule is not denied. But it is urged that good government is no substitute for self-government. There are many instances which tend to substantiate this aphorism. It is, however, extraordinarily difficult to get evidence from witnesses whose testimony would be really convincing. The beneficiaries under an alien rule are generally inarticulate. What would be the verdict of the Egyptian fellaheen, or the Indian peasants?

There are in India many gravely disquieting symptoms. But it is not easy to diagnose the nature of the disease. Is it organic or merely functional? Are the symptoms such as can be relieved by treatment, or do they call for a major surgical operation?

The moving of the waters. To change the metaphor. That there is in India a moving of the waters no impartial observer can doubt. It is equally certain that for this movement English administration has been primarily responsible. The increasingly close contact between a group of Asiatic peoples, naturally conservative in outlook, and a Western people rapidly advancing towards undiluted democracy, accounts by itself for much of the unrest. The confusion is deepened by the logical contradiction between the views of social reactionaries and political extremists. Economically, Mr. Gandhi would seem to be as reactionary as Mr. Ruskin, and yet is in close alliance with the Parsee capitalists of Bombay. Politically, the Congress Party demands the immediate concession of 'Dominion Status'. It must, however, be acknowledged that the Brahmins and Parsees have alike sat at the feet of English or Anglicized teachers. Everything goes back to the educational system. The 'inverted pyramid' has come crashing to the ground. The only dangerous revolutionaries in India are those who have learnt their lesson from English text-books.

Nationalism. It is undoubtedly true that a wave of 'nationalism' has been sweeping over Asia, and has reached India, but that

wave would have lapped the shores of India calmly, almost imperceptibly, had not the people, or some of them, already passed through many stages of preparation. Such nationalism as exists among the peoples of India is mainly the product of the policy persistently pursued by British administrators. English is in India the *lingua franca* of revolution. Dalhousie began the work of material unification.

Yet, despite a century and a half of British rule, India still lacks unity. The map taught the world that there were two Indias—British India and the Indian States. The Round Table Conference has revealed the truth that there are not only two but many Indias, each divided from every other by fissures of religion, race, language, and caste.

For these things England has no responsibility. They Prospect. are the fruit of the womb of History. If, then, we can look back proudly, we must look forward anxiously. Yet anxiety may be tempered with faith, with hope, and above all with charity. Many of the greatest and best and noblest of Englishmen have given their all to India. But looking back upon their lives and their work it is difficult to avoid the reflection that even the strongest of these men have been in the grip of a Power stronger than themselves. Their work has been 'rough hewn', but plainly there has been a Providence that has shaped their ends. That Clive and Warren Hastings, that Wellesley and Dalhousie, that the Elphinstones and Lawrences foresaw the end towards which in fact they were moving it would be fantastic to suppose. Each and all seem to have been acting in blind obedience to Forces the strength and direction of which they themselves never perceived.

Have the scales fallen from our eyes? Are we more certain than they of the end towards which we move? Clio, the Muse of History, holds in her hand an open roll; it is not for her votaries to close it.

About the past we can be confident: we are proud of our record. The key-note of our rule has been efficiency, resting on the twin foundations of justice and power. British

government in India has been strong, because it has been just, and just because it has been strong, and efficient, because it has been both.

We are asked to place the government in other hands which we believe will be less just, less strong, and less efficient. It is no light thing to require an Imperial race at once to surrender the pride of achievement, and to sacrifice the fruits of it: to fling the India that it has nursed up to adolescence into the witches' cauldron, knowing not what will emerge therefrom. Nemesis was indeed the most impartial of goddesses, measuring out to mortals rewards and punishments. Which has our rule in India merited? Let the adjuration of a broad-minded Moslem¹ supply the answer.

'Be not unjust to that nation which is ruling over you, and think on this—how upright is her rule. Of such benevolence as the English Government shows to the foreign nations under her rule there is no example in the history of the world.'

¹ Sir Syed Ahmed, Founder of the Mohammedan College at Alighar. Quoted by Cromer, *op. cit.*

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

- 1453. Constantinople taken by the Turks.
- 1493. Papal Bull (Alexander VI).
- 1497-8. Vasco da Gama's voyage to India by the Cape.
- 1500-1600. Portugal enjoys monopoly of Indian trade.
- 1509. Albuquerque, Governor of Portuguese India.
- 1556-1605. Zenith of Mogul Empire under Akbar.
- 1577-80. Drake sails round the world.
- 1579. Thomas Stevens visits Goa.
- 1581. Charter granted to Levant Company.
- 1589. English Expedition reached India by land.
- 1596. Rise of Dutch Power in East Indies.
- 1600. English East India Company founded.
- 1601-11. Early English voyages.
- 1602. Dutch East India Company founded.
- 1604. French East India Company founded.
- 1609. Charter of E. I. Co. renewed.
- 1615. Sir Thomas Roe sent as Envoy to Great Mogul.
- 1622-3. Massacre at Amboyna.
- 1634. English permitted to trade throughout the dominions of the Great Mogul.
- 1639. Madras bought by E. I. Co. Fort St. George built.
- 1640. E. I. Co.'s Factory at Hoogly.
- 1652. Dutch E. I. Co. establish station at the Cape.
- 1657. Cromwell grants Charter to E. I. Co.
- 1661. Bombay acquired by England.
- " Charles II grants Charter to E. I. Co.
- 1664. French (Colbert's) E. I. Co. established.
- 1669. Bombay granted to E. I. Co. by Charles II.
- 1674. Pondicherry founded by the French.
- 1681. Bengal established as separate Presidency.
- 1686. Calcutta founded.
- " James II grants Charter to E. I. Co.
- 1691. New Company established.
- 1693. New Charter to Old E. I. Co. (7 Oct.).
- 1694. Supplemental Charters.
- 1696. Fort William built.
- 1698. Charter modifying powers of E. I. Co.
- " 'General Society' incorporated by Act of 9 and 10 William III,
c. 44.
- " 'General Society' incorporated as a Regulated Company.
- 1707. Death of Aurungzeb.
- 1709. Union of the two Companies as United E. I. Co.
- 1720. Rise of Marathas.

1726. Municipal Charters granted to Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay.
1739. Invasion of Nadir Shah.
- 1740-8. War of the Austrian Succession.
- 1742-54. Dupleix in India.
1746. La Bourdonnais takes Madras.
1748. English besiege Pondicherry.
 " Madras restored by Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.
- 1750-4. War between English and French Companies.
1751. Clive seizes Arcot.
1752. French Surrender Trichinopoly.
1754. Dupleix recalled.
 " Peace signed at Pondicherry.
1756. Ahmad Shah Durani sacks Delhi.
 " Siraju-d daula becomes Nawab of Bengal, takes Calcutta.
 " Black Hole Massacre.
- 1756-63. Seven Years' War.
1757. Clive retakes Calcutta.
 " Clive's victory at Plassey
1758. Lally besieges Madras.
 " Marathas invade Punjab.
1760. Coote defeats Lally at Wandewash.
 " Clive returns to England.
1761. Coote takes Pondicherry.
 " Fall of French power in the Deccan.
 " Ahmad Shah defeats Marathas at Panipat.
1763. Peace of Paris. Pondicherry restored to France.
1764. Battle of Buxar.
1765. Clive returns to India.
 " Clive accepts *Diwani* of Bengal.
 " Clive concludes Treaties with Oudh and the Mogul Emperor.
1766. Northern Circars granted to E. I. Co.
 " Parliamentary Inquiry into affairs of E. I. Co.
- 1767-9. First War with Hyder Ali.
1767. Clive finally leaves India.
 " Parliament passes Acts (7 George III, cc. 48, 49, 56, 57)
re E. I. Co.
1768. Carnatic ceded to E. I. Co. by Nizam.
1769. Arrangement for five years between Parliament and Company.
1770. Famine in Bengal.
1772. Warren Hastings Governor of Bengal
 " Secret Parliamentary inquiry into affairs of E. I. Co.
1773. Rohilla War.
 " *Regulating Act* (13 George III, c. 63).
1774. Warren Hastings first Governor-General of India.
1778. First Maratha War (1778-81).

- 1780. Second Mysore War.
- 1782. Close of the First Maratha War. Death of Hyder Ali.
- 1784. Pitt's India Act: Establishment of the Board of Control.
- 1785. Warren Hastings leaves India.
- 1786. Impeachment of Hastings.
- " Cornwallis Governor-General (1786-93).
- 1790. Third Mysore War.
- 1792. Submission of Sultan Tipu.
- " Permanent land settlement in Bengal.
- 1793. Pondicherry taken from the French.
- 1798. Lord Wellesley Governor-General (1798-1805).
- 1799. Fourth Mysore War.
- " Capture of Seringapatam.
- " Death of Tipu.
- 1800. Malcolm's Mission to Persia.
- 1802. Treaty of Bassein. The Peshwa transfers his Suzerainty to the Company.
- 1803. Second Maratha War.
- " Battles of Assaye, Alighar, and Delhi.
- 1805. Lord Cornwallis's second Governorship.
- 1806. Sepoy Mutiny at Vellore.
- 1807. Lord Minto Governor-General (1807-13).
- 1808. Metcalfe's Mission to Ranjit Singh.
- 1810. The English occupy the Mauritius and Java.
- 1813. Lord Hastings Governor-General (1813-23).
- " The East India Company's Monopoly cancelled.
- 1814. Nepal War.
- 1817. Pindari War.
- " Last Maratha War.
- 1818. Annexation of the Peshwa's territory.
- 1819. Singapore occupied.
- 1823. Lord Amherst Governor-General (1823-8).
- 1824. First Burmese War. Capture of Rangoon.
- 1826. Capture of Bhartpur.
- 1828. Lord William Bentinck Governor-General (1828-35).
- 1833. Renewal of the Company's Charter.
- 1835. Macaulay's Education Minute.
- 1836. Lord Auckland Governor-General (1836-42).
- 1837. Siege of Herat by the Shah of Persia.
- 1838. First Afghan War.
- 1839. Capture of Kandahar.
- 1840. Occupation of Kabul.
- 1841. Insurrection of Kabul. Murder of Sir A. Burnes.
- 1842. Evacuation of Kabul.
- " Massacre of the British Army in the Khyber Pass.
- " Sale's defence of Jalalabad.
- " Lord Ellenborough Governor-General (1842-4).

- 1842. Reoccupation of Kabul.
- 1843. Annexation of Sind.
- 1844. Lord Hardinge Governor-General (1846-8).
- 1845. First Sikh War.
- 1846. Battles of Aliwal and Sohraon: Treaty of Lahore.
- 1848. Lord Dalhousie Governor-General (1848-56).
- " Second Sikh War.
- 1849. Annexation of the Punjab.
- 1852. Second Burmese War. Annexation of Pegu.
- 1856. The Annexation of Oudh.
- " Lord Canning Governor-General and First Viceroy (1856-62).
- 1857. The Mutiny.
- " Massacre at Cawnpore.
- " Capture of Delhi.
- " Relief of Lucknow.
- 1858. Suppression of the Mutiny.
- " India transferred from the Company to the Crown.
- 1861. *India Councils Act*.
- " Judicial reforms.
- " Indian Civil Service Act.
- 1862. Lord Elgin Governor-General.
- " Death of ex-Emperor Bahadur Shah.
- 1863. Death of Dost Muhammad.
- 1864. Sir John Lawrence Governor-General.
- 1865-7. Famine in Orissa.
- 1868. Sher Ali Amir of Afghanistan.
- 1868-9. Famine in Rajputana.
- 1869. Lord Mayo Governor-General.
- " Visit of H.R.H. Duke of Edinburgh.
- 1872. Murder of Lord Mayo (24 Jan.).
- 1872-6. Lord Northbrook Governor-General.
- 1875. Bihar Famine.
- 1875-6. Tour of H.R.H. Prince of Wales (afterwards Edward VII).
- 1876. Lord Lytton Viceroy.
- " *Royal Titles Act*.
- " Occupation of Quetta.
- 1876-8. Famine in Southern India.
- 1877. Delhi Durbar.
- 1878-80. Second Afghan War.
- 1879. Treaty of Gandamak.
- " Murder of Cavagnari.
- 1880-4. Lord Ripon Viceroy.
- 1881. Mysore restored to Hindu Raja.
- 1883. The Ilbert Bill.
- 1883-5. Local Government Reform.
- 1884-8. Lord Dufferin Viceroy.

1885. Penjdeh incident.
 " Third Burmese War.
 " Indian National Congress at Bombay.
 1886. Annexation of Upper Burma.
 1887. Queen Victoria's Jubilee.
 1888-94. Lord Lansdowne Viceroy.
 1891. Civil Service reforms.
 " Manipur massacre.
 1892. *India Councils Act* (Lord Cross's).
 1894-9. Lord Elgin Viceroy.
 1895. Chitral expedition.
 1896-7. Plague and Famine.
 1897. Tirah expedition.
 1899-1905. Lord Curzon Viceroy.
 1901. Death of Queen Victoria.
 " Creation of N.W. Frontier Province.
 1903. Expedition to Tibet.
 1904. Universities Act.
 1905. Partition of Bengal.
 " Russo-Japanese War.
 1905-10. Lord Minto Viceroy.
 1905-6. Visit of Prince of Wales.
 1907. Anglo-Russian Convention.
 1909. Morley-Minto reforms (*Indian Councils Act*).
 1909-11. Anarchist crimes.
 1910-16. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst Viceroy.
 1911. Visit of King George V and Queen Mary.
 " Coronation Durbar.
 " Bengal reunited.
 " Delhi to be capital.
 1913. Indians in South Africa.
 1914-18. World War.
 " Disturbances in Punjab.
 1915. *Defence of India Act*.
 1916-21. Lord Chelmsford Viceroy.
 1917. Declaration of 20 August.
 1918. Montagu-Chelmsford Report.
 " Report of Rowlatt Committee.
 1919. *Government of India Act*.
 " *Rowlatt Act*.
 1920. Mr. Gandhi inaugurates Non-Co-operation.
 1921. The new Indian Legislature and Chamber of Princes inaugurated by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught.
 1921-6. Lord Reading Viceroy.
 1921 The Moplah rebellion.
 " Visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.
 1922. Imprisonment of Mr. Gandhi.

- 1922 *Swaraj* party founded by C. R. Das (*d.* 1925).
 1923-. Communal riots.
 1924. Report of Superior Civil Service (Lee) Commission.
 1926-30. Lord Irwin Viceroy.
 1927. Appointment of Statutory (Simon) Commission.
 1928. Appointment and Report of Nehru (Congress) Committee.
 1928-9. Report of the Indian States (Butler) Committee.
 " Simon Commission in India.
 1929. Communal riots.
 " (31 Oct.) Announcement by Lord Irwin on Dominion Status.
 " Report of Indian Central Committee.
 " Announcement on Federalism by Maharajah of Bikaner.
 1930. Mr. Gandhi inaugurates 'Civil Disobedience' campaign.
 " Report of Statutory Commission.
 " Round Table Conference 1st Session Nov.-Jan. 1931.
 1931. Irwin-Gandhi agreement (March).
 " Communal war at Cawnpore.
 " Lord Willingdon Viceroy.
 " Terrorist outrages.
 " Round Table Conference (Sept.-Dec.).

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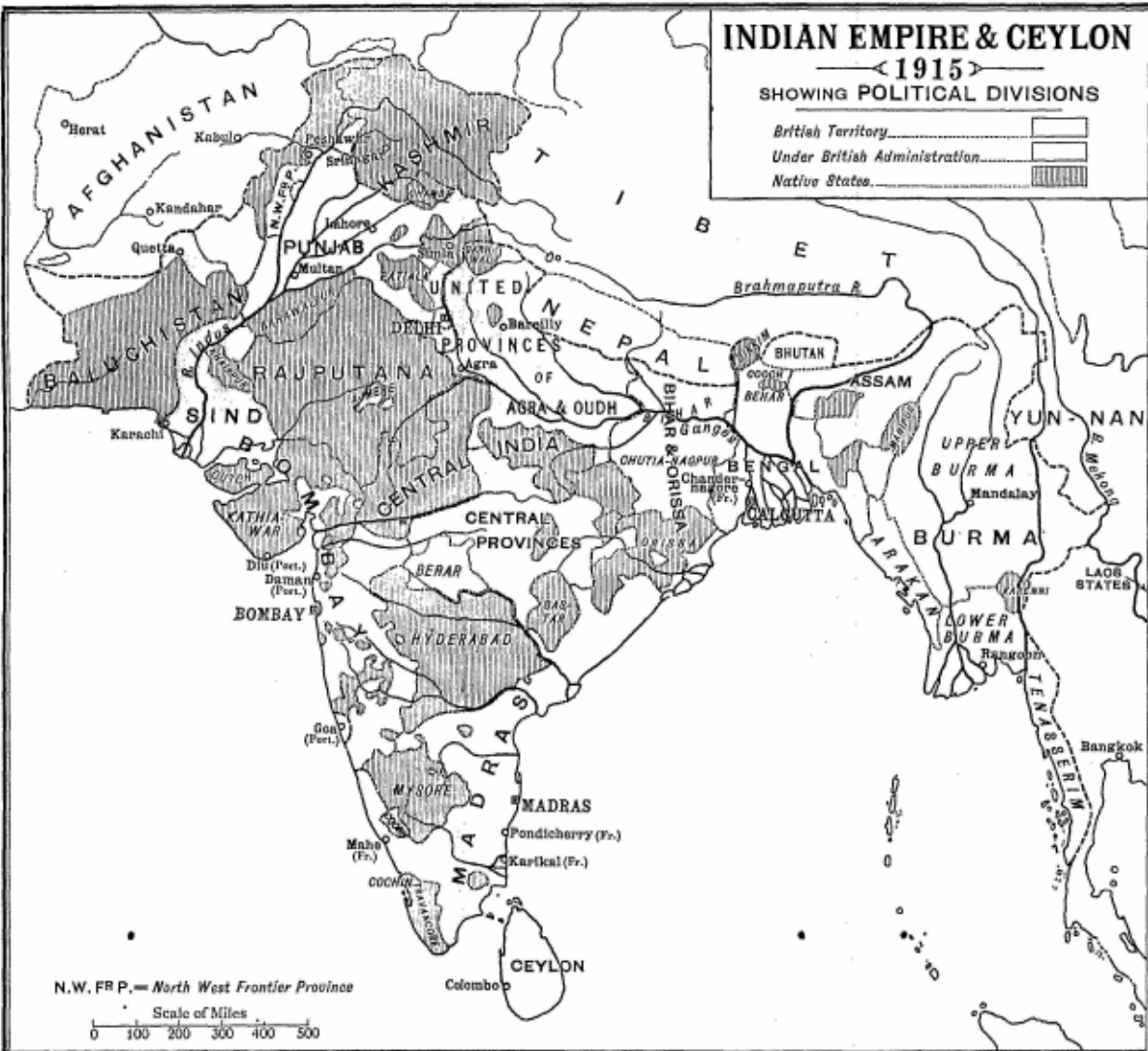
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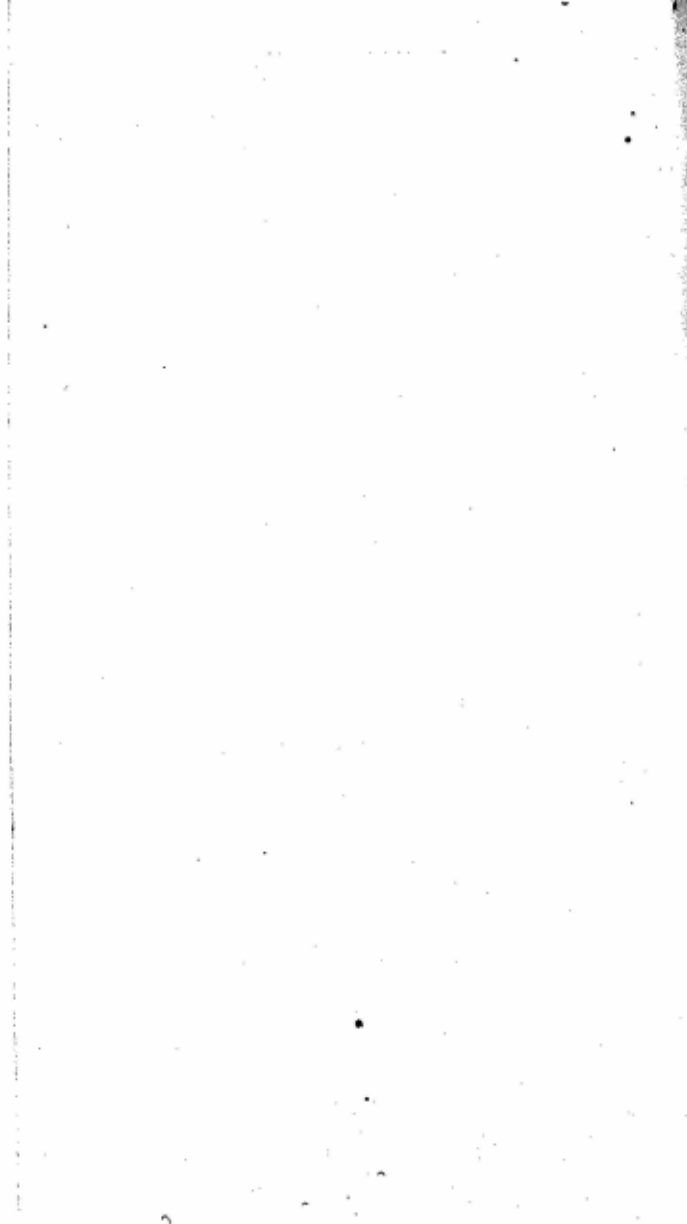
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